

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 7th January 2021, commencing 7.30 pm.

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

Present Mr J O'Mahony, Vice-Chairman.

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

Mr R Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor (left to attend another meeting at 7.55 pm)

Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey (joined the meeting at 8.15 pm.), Babergh District Councillors for Lavenham Ward.

2 members of the public.

The Parish Council had received Mr Reeve's formal resignation as Chairman on 17th December. Mr O'Mahony took the Chair to conduct the appointment of a new Chairman

Election of Chairman

Mr Lamont had made known his willingness to serve as Chairman. There were no other nominations and Mr Lamont's election was proposed by Mr Reeve, seconded by Mr Macro and agreed.

Mr Lamont thanked the members for their support, he said he will do his best to serve the community, although there is some way to go before he comes up to speed.

Mr O'Mahony on behalf of all present thanked Mr Reeve who has served the community of Lavenham with distinction for many years. His knowledge and experience had brought about many improvements for residents, businesses and visitors. In his role of Chairman of the Parish Council he had demonstrated excellent leadership and patience with all whom he had come into contact. He will be sorely missed in that role.

At a future time when the rigours of the current pandemic have been relaxed we will gather together to thank him in a more traditional manner than is currently possible and wish him well for the future.

Public Forum – Mr Ranzetta had forwarded details of the National Lottery Culture Recovery Fund and hoped that the Parish Council would be able to support local businesses if they made applications to the Fund. The information had been circulated to other bodies in the village.

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 November, there had been 2 crimes: Theft Other x 1; Public Order x 1.

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

Mr Lindsay wished Mr Lamont well in his new position as Chairman.

There was negative news in that the proposed speed surveys had been postponed although no date had been given for them to start. Money had been allocated to carry these out so they must go ahead eventually.

He would continue to nag and hope to get on the list the many potholes and blocked drains reported in the village. Lady Street was a particularly bad example and it was hoped to make a case for resurfacing.

District Councillor's Reports, Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey *(Mr Arthey would be joining the meeting following attendance at BDC Cabinet.)*

Mrs Maybury wished Mr Reeve well and said that in the last two years she had learned much from him. She congratulated Mr Lamont on his new role.

Mrs Maybury also congratulated Mrs Twitchett for the BEM awarded in the New Years Honours, she felt very proud of her. The Council joined in the congratulations. Mrs Twitchett thanked everyone for their good wishes, it was strange to get recognition for something she enjoys doing and she acknowledged the contribution of the Good Neighbours team behind her.

Lavenham's CIL bids (Prentice Street car park and Tenter Piece) were approved by Cabinet in December.

Cabinet has deferred discussions on possible future car parking charges to enable every Councillor time to talk and debate. It was felt that this was not the time to be considering increases in charges, the knock on effect for businesses in Sudbury especially could be disastrous. It was felt that Lavenham should seek assurances that the present arrangement in Lavenham will remain as it is pending further investigations. John Ward had referred to an independent report and it was felt this should be in the public domain. When he joined the meeting Mr Arthey said that there was no proposal in the paper for any changes to Lavenham car parks.

The Cabinet has formally agreed the £160,000 commuted sum towards the purchase by Lavenham CLT of four houses on the Hopkins site on Melford Road for Local Needs.

Vaccine rollout, John Nunn from Long Melford and Irene Mitchell from Lavenham and helping with plans for this. It is reported that West Suffolk Hospital is at capacity with 170 Covid patients.

Details are awaited of further support for those businesses forced to close again in the current lockdown. Details will be on the website as soon as they are available.

HWRCs remain open with prior booking system.

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

Declarations of Interest – Mrs Norman declared an interest in the quotation for works in Mud Lane and would not take part in any discussions.

Apologies for absence - none

Co-option to vacancy

Mr Matt Chick had expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. Details (CV) had been circulated to all Councillors and it was resolved that he should be co-opted to fill the vacancy, he appeared to possess skills which would be of value to the community. Proposed Mrs Mitchell, seconded Mr Reeve and agreed. Matt signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was welcomed to the meeting.

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues

The Parish Council's responses to the Joint Local Plan and CIL rates consultations had been submitted to Babergh.

Research is continuing into the potential 'rewilding' of part of the First Meadow and the processes involved and Mrs Norman will shortly talk to somebody willing to get involved in a community project.

The Prentice Street car park and toilets will be closed from Monday 11th January and work will commence, firstly with work to the trees followed by the demolition of the toilet

block.

Work at Tenter Piece will probably get underway in mid-March, consideration has to be given to the possible vulnerability of the residents. The only outstanding issue with the Church Street toilets is planning, the application has been submitted.

The installation of the Defibrillator sponsored by W A Deacon Funeral Services was completed on 19th December, Mr David Deacon and his son Paul were present for the handover.

Mr Lamont gave a quick summary of the CIL situation. The Parish Council is grateful for the support of both Mrs Maybury and Mr Arthey in the applications.

Mrs Mitchell reported that the vaccination programme should commence at Lavenham Surgery, for both Lavenham and Long Melford patients, on Monday 11th January. She and John Nunn from Long Melford are recruiting a volunteer task force to control the parking and waiting areas. There are 65 volunteers, from both Lavenham and Long Melford communities, and the business communities have also been very helpful. Mr Lamont thanked Mrs Mitchell and Mr Nunn for their amazing efforts.

Finance and Strategy

Invoices paid between meetings:

Community Action Suffolk, NDP review survey software £300.00: Cabins and Containers, 50% deposit for Prentice Street twin disabled WC cabins £10,187.40.

A letter dated 17/12/20 sent to the Bank requested the transfer of £10,000.00 between accounts to cover this expenditure.

Cheques for payment:

idverde Ltd., public toilets works for December £1,800.00: JPB Landscapes, (December winter maintenance £345.00, street cleaning £1,253.33) + VAT £1,918.00: Lavenham Press Ltd, printing December newsletter £540.00: Suffolk Tree Services, annual works at Cemetery £1,560.00: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Payroll £749.28: Paul Holland, Church St toilets plumb pipework, lag, supply/fit new tap to water heater £125.00: Fox Cars, hire of Covid19 compliant taxis for GNS appointments £42.00: Printerinks, ink cartridges £50.75: British Gas, electricity supply to Church St. toilets £20.05: A & D Fayers, Christmas trees £250.00: Sterling Electrics, final payment for Christmas lighting £890.00: Kinex, phone account Oct £40.22: PKF Littlejohn LLP, external audit fee £720.00. PWLB loan repayment due 18/01/2021 £3,758.79.

A letter to the Bank requested the transfer of £20,000.00 between accounts.

Mrs Norman proposed, Mr Macro seconded, that the financial transactions are approved. Carried.

Precept 2021/22 amended timetable - final Tax Base figures are awaited from Babergh District Council but once these are received a meeting of the Finance Working Group will consider the precept requirement for 2021/22 and put forward a recommendation to a meeting of the full Council which is still to be arranged but must be before 29th January.

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

Applications for Listed Building Consent

DC/20/05444 14 Shilling Street, Lavenham

Conversion of loft to provide additional bedroom and insertion of Gable Window. Demolish loggia and other works as Heritage Statement.

The works proposed to the main part of the building are acceptable. However the conversion

of the loft space will lead to the obscuring of the original roof timbers/structure which is an important feature within the listed building. Recommend Refusal

DC/20/05430 31 Water Street Lavenham

Internal and external refurbishment as detailed in Scope of works Drawings.

Proposals comply with CN08, CS2, CN06 and have no impact on setting or street scene. The refurbishment seeks to repair, restore and improve the property. Recommend Approval

Outline Planning Applications (All matters reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990

DC/20/05374 Land adjacent to Tudor Cottage, The Common, Lavenham

Erection of 1No. dwelling.

This has been registered as a self-build project although the land has not previously been identified for self-build or as a development site. Because of historic use of the site and some residual derelict sheds it can be classed as a Brownfield site. It sits outside but close to the BUAB but within acceptable distance from the centre of the village (800m) and within the Conservation Area. The proposal is for a low level 2 bedroom dwelling suitable for retirement living situated in the lower corner of the plot, close to the rear of Tudor Cottage garden, facing onto Lower Road. The site is within green undeveloped area confined by Shilling Street to the West, the Common and Bolton Street. It was not identified as a Green Space in the LNP but is close to the Defined Views into and out of the village i.e. 5 Bolton Street, 6 The Common and 10 Shilling Street as set out in Policy ENV1. The impact on these views does not meet the criteria set out in ENV1. There are also concerns regarding surface water runoff from the proposal as Lower Road is susceptible to frequent flooding between the site and the Common and Clay Hall Lane. Recommend Refusal

DC/20/04583 Brett Farm, Clay Hall Lane, Lavenham

Erection of 1No. dwelling(following demolition of existing stables/barn)

The demolition of the single-storey timber clad agricultural buildings (former chicken sheds and stables) of no visual appeal, and proposal for a new build single-storey dwelling will not have significant impact on the views into the site which is well screened by hedges. The proposal is outside of the BUAB but sits within the acceptable (800m) distance from the centre of the village services and meets sustainable requirements. It will provide a single-storey property suitable for downsizing and/or retirement, which are in short supply within Lavenham. Recommend Approval

Applications for work on Trees in a Conservation Area and/or protected by a Tree Preservation Order

DC/20/05472 The Island House, Lower Road, Lavenham

T1 (Silver Birch) - Fell. T2 (silver Birch) - reduce height by 5-6m and shape to top. T3 (Hawthorn) - fell. T4 (Hazel) - reduce height by 50%. T5 (Hawthorn Stem) - fell.

No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/05480 5 White Gates Lavenham CO10 9FL

T1 (Silver Birch) - reduce height by 4-5m and shape. T2 (Silver Birch) - reduce height by 5m to face back the long branches and shape. T3 (Silver Birch) - reduce height by 5m.

No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/05374 Woolstaplers Hall 24 Prentice Street Lavenham CO10 9 RD

T6 (yew) - reduce tree by 50%.

No issues. Recommend Approval

Following consideration of the recommendations made by the Planning Working Group it was proposed by Mrs Morrey, seconded by Mr Reeve, that the recommendations be endorsed by the meeting. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/20/04527 The Black Barn, Hall Road, Lavenham - Planning Permission granted re 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.

DC/20/04545 The Bungalow, Weaners Farm, Bears Lane, Lavenham - Planning Permission granted for erection of single storey side extension

DC/20/04680 Hidden House, Hall Road, Lavenham – Planning Permission granted for Change of use of dwelling (C3) to architect's studio (Class E)

Operations

Former Gas Works Site - Mr O'Mahony had sent an email to our Environmental Consultant on 29th December, this set out the current situation and was a summary of the monthly reports made to the Council. At the moment the Parish Council is trying to get a response from NG following a reminder that we all wish to work in partnership and asking for a rethink in respect of the order of works as it is thought that the restoration contractors would prefer to work on a clean and level site rather than the site in its present state.

James Cartlidge MP has become aware of the situation and has written to NG, we are hoping for a meaningful response early in the new year.

Traffic and Road Schemes - Civil Enforcement has begun and predictably there have been complaints of the enforcement officers being overzealous.

Water Street Scheme - Robert Lindsay has agreed to fund the necessary planning and this is due to begin "early in the new year". This is to be the first step in making the signage more aesthetically pleasing. It is our intention to consult with local residents when there are some proposals to consider.

Brent Eleigh Road - proposal for a parking lane by moving back the fence line on First Meadow on hold due to other priorities.

Lower Road - possible new public footpath, again more time needed to consider this.

With regard to drainage, contact has been maintained with Amanda Mays of Highways who recalled that about 2 years ago the gullies, offlets and pipes were jetted clear and they were also put on the enhanced cleansing cycle, twice a year rather than once a year. She has checked and they are still on that rota. However another visit this summer did not appear to have been carried out, that will be chased up. An additional reactive visit with the jetter might be required again, this would not prevent water flowing over the embankment, but will help allow water back into the river once levels subside reducing the duration the road is flooded.

There is movement on the hole in the redundant culvert near the gas works on Water Street, the video survey confirmed this is not an active culvert, some additional money in the budget has meant trial hole/exploratory excavations are currently being arranged to help work out how repairs might be effected

Use of Market Place – for many years there has been discussion about the use of the central area for car parking. Due to lack of opportunity for public debate this is not the time to be considering changes but it is interesting to note that during the 9 months, so far, of the Covid 19 pandemic the initiative to cone-off a section of the Market Place to allow socially distanced queuing to the shops located there, there has seen much approval by the community, despite the loss of several parking spaces.

Road and pavement sweeping - are becoming more needed every day. For a location that relies on being an attractive venue we are falling short. This includes Church Street and Prentice Street car parks.

Flooding in Mud Lane (Old Road) – due to overflow from the ditch beside this green lane this right of way is impassable to pedestrians. Babergh District Council is responsible for the bank

behind the housing in Spring Lane, Suffolk County Council is responsible for the path but will not take responsibility for the state of the ditch/brook which runs behind housing in Weavers Close. Anglian Water will not take any responsibility either. Not only is the path impassable on foot, but water runs down the lane and onto Lower Road where it causes flooding. After much discussion it was decided that the situation would only get worse if left and it was proposed that the Parish Council carry out remedial works to alleviate the flooding. The work would be on a one-off basis for the benefit of the community and it must be made clear that the Parish Council does not assume any responsibility for the area of land. Proposed by Mrs Twitchett, seconded by Mr O'Mahony and agreed. (1 vote against) Works quoted by Mr Norman included removing a fallen Willow tree blocking the brook and the debris/silt build up which is creating the flooding. Clearing to be carried out from the Leylandii trees back to the first property's wooden fence, approximately 70 yards. Spoil to be distributed on adjacent bank, branches to be chipped and spread to repair path surface. Total cost £2,200. Proposed by Mr Reeve, seconded by Mr Macro, and agreed that this quotation is accepted. Work to commence on a date dependent on weather conditions.

Housing & Social

Good Neighbours Scheme - Mrs Twitchett reported that there was not much to report, there had been a few transport requests for health appointments and a request to take a consent form to Long Melford Surgery. There had been concern that there had been too little time in some cases for patients to return their Covid vaccination forms to the Long Melford Surgery but Mrs Mitchell had been assured that in cases where the form had not been returned they will telephone patients regarding appointments.

Correspondence had been received from:

From residents of Bridge Street Road with concerns about a tree which they believe is on the Cemetery boundary and which is interfering with their telephone lines. Location of tree checked by Councillors and Clerk and agreed it is not the Parish Council's responsibility as it is not on that boundary.

Newgate Communications, invitation to consultation on proposals for Sunnica Energy Farm connecting to the Burwell National Grid Substation in Cambridgeshire. Sites under consideration are at Isleham, Freckenham/Worlington, Chippenham/Kennett and Snailwell (all in Cambridgeshire or Suffolk/Cambridgeshire border) - circulated

SALC, consultation on Suffolk County Council: Help Shape Guidance for New Housing Developments in Suffolk. The consultation is open until 10 February 2021. - circulated

Neighbourhood Development Plan revision

Weekly meetings have been set up and the survey software purchased from CAS. The question had been asked as to whether it would be wise to delay the questionnaire. If not in lockdown there would be a degree of people coming into contact, talking on the doorstep, public meetings etc. If delayed however when would it be put out, the National Census will be coming in March 2021.

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

There was some further discussion about the the National Lottery Culture Recovery Fund and whether the Parish Council might be eligible to apply. The information had been forwarded to the Forum and other people who might be able to apply.

It was reported that more volunteers might be required for the rota to support the Post Office which was not able to operate unless there was another person present on the premises in addition to their counter staff. Mrs Mitchell thought there might be a local volunteer on her

list who might be able to assist.

Mr Panton reported that the some of the fencing beside the Anglian Water cabinet at the Preston Road end of the footpath behind the housing in Lower Road had collapsed.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 4th February 2021.

The meeting closed at 10 pm.