

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 5th September 2024, commencing at 7.30 pm. in the Village Hall.

Full reports and supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, September 2024 Meeting Pack. Paper copies are also available.

Present:

Chair: Cllr Janice Muckian. Cllrs: Alison Bourne, Iain Lamont, Irene Mitchell, Mary Morrey, Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Three members of the public.

Opening Statement by the Chair:

The Chair began by welcoming everyone and introduced herself explaining to all present that this meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute taking only and that after the minutes have been approved the recording will be destroyed. The Chair reminded all that this is not a public meeting, but a meeting of the Council held in public. Members of the Public were respectfully asked to maintain silence during the Council's deliberations and not to approach the Councillors. Councillors were requested not to engage with Members of the Public when Council is in session. All were asked to ensure that their mobile phone was on silent.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

The Clerk explained that Councillor Ranzetta had sent her apologies. Cllr Domoney had not responded to the meeting invitation.

2. Declarations of Interest

No Councillor declared an interest.

3. Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk reported that none had been received other than those previously reported.

4. To approve as accurate minutes of the 8th August 2024 meeting of the Council

The Chair introduced the minutes which have been on the Parish Council website for two weeks.

Motion: to approve as accurate the minutes of the 8th August 2024 meeting of Council.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Sherman

Decision: The minutes of the 8th August 2024 meeting of the Council were unanimously approved as accurate.

5. Public Participation Session

The Chair reminded Members of the Public of the protocol for this session. Those who wish to ask a question or make a statement have three minutes. Matters raised must concern business on the agenda or local matters. If a question cannot be answered tonight Members of the Public should contact the Clerk with their name and contact details and will receive a written response within 28 days.

A Member of the Public expressed concern about the proposed blue sign, numbered RS2 in the Agenda Papers, proposed for the High St near the junction with Spring St saying that he was concerned that it would make turning out of Spring St onto the High St difficult, the sightline impaired. The Chair acknowledged his point suggesting that this issue could be part of the reason that the RS2 sign was proposed, by Suffolk Highways, to have its lower edge 2.1 metres above the ground.

A Member of the Public asked if the summary booklet to be distributed before the Neighbourhood Plan referendum would detail all the changes made since the original document. He also expressed concern that the timetable for the referendum is too short.



The Chair replied that all the detailed documents that are the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan, including the Examiners Report, are in the public domain and that the changes currently being made are those required by the Examiner with Babergh currently checking the accuracy of that change processing.

The Chair explained that the changes required by the Examiner are numerous, many of them grammatical and that the purpose of the summary document is to explain the content of the fuller documents as finally drafted. The Chair explained to the Member of the Public that Babergh District Council selects the referendum date and expressed hope that the referendum date would be before the full onset of winter.

A Member of the Public questioned why Babergh Council are determined to charge for use of the Prentice St Car Park but appear to have little interest in charging for the Water St Car Park. The Chair responded that she understood the thinking behind the question i.e. that both car parks are of similar size but reminded the Member of the Public that the usage of the two car parks was currently very different.

6. Chairman's Announcements

The Chair reported that, together with the Clerk, she had met with Suffolk Highways and the Babergh Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Officer at the site of the proposed Green Willows footpath.

The Babergh Officer had explained that the CIL Bid had not been included within the September Babergh Cabinet papers because no detailed design had been prepared by Suffolk Highways to give maximum certainty about the costs. Highways had only prepared a basic design and cost quotation.

The Babergh Officer apologised that she had not informed the Parish Council of either the non-inclusion of the papers or the detailed design question. She acknowledged that the question of a more detailed design had not been raised when the application was requested or received.

The Babergh Officer also explained that the Babergh CIL framework will not permit costs incurred before the bid is approved (e.g. detailed design costs) to be included within the CIL bid conceding that Babergh policy demands that such a detailed design has been completed to give further certainty concerning the total estimate of costs.

Suffolk and Babergh, the Chair reported, will not fund the design costs from other budgets with these costs and the effect of these further design costs on the total estimate unknown. Suffolk Highways will provide an estimate of the design costs by mid-September. The Clerk has raised the matter with County Cllr Lindsay and will prepare a paper for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The Chair reported that no response has yet been received from Suffolk Highways following a July meeting with County Council Cabinet Member for Highways Cllr West concerning lorry signage on the Hadleigh side of Lavenham. She advised Councillors that this is a separate issue to the signage matters included in the agenda for this meeting.

The Chair reported that a chance meeting with a Suffolk Highways Officer has led to a nine metre stretch of Water St near the collapsed pavement being included for repair and that the Clerk has written to the County Council Cabinet Member for Highways Cllr Paul West complaining about the delay in repairing the Water St pavement. County Cllr Robert Lindsay will also be writing to Cllr West.

No costing information has been received from Suffolk Highways concerning the proposed 20 mph zone and Babergh Council has not yet released any proposed changes to local planning rules concerning listed buildings.

The Chair informed Councillors that a mature hedgerow at the western boundary of the Paddocks development has been removed and replaced with a rather conspicuous fence. She has reported the matter to Babergh who are investigating.

Cllr Mitchell asked if Babergh had, prior to the CIL application being submitted, agreed that design costs could be included. The Clerk confirmed that Babergh had agreed to this in writing.



7. Local Authority Councillors' Report

District Cllr Maybury reported that she had watched two Babergh operatives emptying the waste bins ignoring a black bag full of rubbish and residue litter beside one of the bins. The Public Realm Manager has responded that operatives are required to empty and litter pick around the waste bins during their visit and to make sure the bins are firmly closed. She suggested that should the Parish Council wish to purchase more frequent waste collections from Babergh over the summer that this might be possible.

District Cllr Maybury had also met with Babergh Officers regarding car parking charges. Lavenham, she explained, is currently omitted from car movement data as currently there is no way of recording it. The village does not have car parking ticket machines and therefore the majority of recorded vehicle visits are within Sudbury. 1.09 million car parking tickets were issued between November 2022 and October 2023 of these 830,000 were in Sudbury and 264,000 tickets in Hadleigh. The estimated usage in Lavenham is 65,000. The estimated usage across Babergh after the implementation of charges is 1 million (allowing for 10-20% reduction). It is expected that the car parking charges will not lead to a car parking profit for Babergh but will reduce the BDC annual car parking deficit. Suggestions to permit one hour's free parking in all the car parks had been rejected as the cost of this was estimated to be £150,000 pa. It is envisaged that car parking enforcement staff will visit Lavenham every weekend.

She noted that the Mill Road, Sudbury resident car park permit cost is only £25 per annum.

The Clerk explained that this scheme is somewhat different to those in Lavenham as to park in that car park you have to live in one of three streets all of which are subject to car parking restrictions and severe over-crowding.

The Clerk reported that County Cllr Lindsay had sent his apologies, he is at the Green Party Conference. The Clerk tabled County Cllr Lindsay's report highlighting the section about the ongoing issues with respect to Suffolk County Children's Services and the section about Government Funding for Community EV sites which had made possible the Parish Council's bid to enter the Suffolk County Council scheme with Connected Kerb.

8. Planning Applications for Consideration

The Clerk informed Cllrs that no decisions had recently been received from Babergh Council contrary to the PC's recommendations.

DC/24/03572

Teazle Cottage, 30 Water Street, Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9RN

Reduce 1No Red Norway Maple (T1) by one third back to the previous points to manage growth.

Fell 1No Himalayan Birch (T2) as the tree is dead and died from honey fungus and fell 1No Cherry (T3) as the tree is dying, suspected honey fungus as tree is close to the Himalayan Birch and has signs of decay at the base.

Cllr Lamont reported that the Planning Group considers this work reasonable tree maintenance and felling of diseased trees. The trees he explained, are not subject to Tree Preservation Orders and so there is no requirement to replace the trees. Cllr Morrey added that any replacement in the near term would be unwise due to the fungus.

Motion: that Application DC/24/03572 be recommended for approval

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

DC/24/03461

57 High Street Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9PY

Householder application - Erection of a detached outbuilding for use as home office (following demolition of existing shed)



Cllr Lamont reported that the building is Grade II listed but outside the Conservation area. The building would be partially visible from some of the houses on Spring St but would not be visible from the High Street. The proposed outbuilding is flat roofed and clad in red cedar panels and would have little impact on the area. The proposal is for a non-permanent structure replacing another temporary building and so the recommendation of the Planning Group is for approval on the condition it cannot be used as residential accommodation.

Motion: that Application DC/24/03461 be recommended for approval on the condition it cannot be used as residential accommodation.

Proposed: Cllr Bourne

Seconded: Cllr Robinson

Decision: Approved unanimously.

DC/24/03450

Dyers Hall, 95 High Street, Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9PZ

Application for Listed Building Consent - Removal of existing cracking render and replace with lime render painted to match existing.

Cllr Lamont reported that the property is adjacent to the Greyhound Pub, the current render is a mixture of sand and cement on the east, west and south elevations, and is not the correct traditional mix and that the proposal is that after the current render is removed repairs are made to the timber frame as required, wool installation and a breathable membrane are installed and then cover with traditional lime render. The Planning Group, he said, considers this to be the repairing and improving the condition of a Heritage asset and recommends Approval.

Motion: that Application DC/24/03450 be recommended for approval

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr Robinson

Decision: Approved unanimously.

DC/24/03400

The Guildhall Of Corpus Christi, Market Place, Lavenham CO10 9QZ

Application for Listed Building Consent. Incorporation of additional fire protection measures as per Design and Access Statement.

These provisions are described in detail in the document attached to the application.

Cllr Lamont explained the key works:

- a) Fire Stopping Seals: The application of intumescent fire stopping seals around where existing electric and fire alarm cables penetrate through ceiling and wall plaster.
- b) Replace a modern ceiling loft hatch within the first-floor store room of inadequate thickness with a new 44mm thick loft hatch.
- c) Second Floor: Loft Space above storeroom 2: The incorporation of two layers fire protecting Firefly – Athena 60/60 Barrier Curtain to be installed onto southwest internal wall within the attic to provide 60 minutes of fire and 60 minutes of integrity between two spaces within the property.
- d) Historic Loft Hatch – Install a 40mm thick fire resisting panel to upper side of the original hatch.
- e) Loft 2 wall with modern door: Door to be routed out around the edge and 15mm smoke seals fitted. Fire rated hinges and overhead door closer to be fitted.

Cllr Sherman asked why the two hatches were subject to different works. Cllr Lamont explained that one hatch was modern and the other historic commenting that this was a public building and so fire standards had to be high and that the recommendation of the Planning Group was for approval.

Motion: that Application DC/24/03400 be recommended for approval

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.



DC/24/03083

Land And Outbuildings at The Hall, Hall Road, Lavenham CO10 9QX

Planning Application - Works to facilitate change of use of stables, existing home office/gallery to 1no dwelling including sub-division of yard area, car port parking, new studio and storage areas. Works to include rear extension link-attached to the stables served by new terrace area, erection of free-standing pergola, installation of windows, doors, rooflights, railings etc and solar panels and landscaping works.

Cllr Lamont reported that:

- a) This application is the Planning Permission Application that is related to the Listed Building Consent Application DC/24/03084 recommended for approval by the PC on 8th August 2024.
- b) Energy Efficiency and Flood Risk Assessments have been completed and appear satisfactory.
- c) The Heritage Statement includes details of Pre-application Advice given by the Planning Office under pre-application consultation ref: DC/23/04862. A number of changes have been made as a result of the consultation and it is confirmed the application meets Joint Local Plan policy LP19 and Lavenham Neighbourhood plan 2016.
- d) The Design and Access statement also addressed alignment with the recently published JLP and Lavenham Neighbourhood plan 2016. This is satisfactory.
- e) The Ecology assessment identifies a need for Bat Boxes, Sparrow Terrace and Hedgehog Ramp and a Non-Licensed Method Statement. These need to be included in the development.
- f) The Planning Group recommends approval.

Cllr Sherman asked why the recommendation was not the same as the motion passed with respect to the application for Listed Building Consent. Cllr Lamont agreed that such consistency was appropriate.

Cllr Mitchell suggested that the recommendation also refer to the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan which she said carries some weight and the stipulation in that Plan that replacement dwellings and conversion are permitted outside the settlement boundary.

Cllr Robinson suggested that the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan should not be referred to as it has not been passed at a referendum and that Babergh had told him that it did not carry weight.

The Clerk explained that Babergh Planning had confirmed in writing that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan carried some weight as does the existing Neighbourhood Plan, both are relevant.

Motion: the Parish Council supports Application DC/24/03083 but has concerns that solar panels are proposed within the curtilage of a Grade 2 building visible from a Grade 1 building (the church tower).

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr Lamont

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Sherman abstained.

DC/24/03337

Mill Cottage, Bears Lane, Lavenham Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9RX

Householder Application - Erection of timber fencing (following removal of section of hedge).

Cllr Lamont explained that this application is in parallel with an insurance claim relating to repairs required to a detached garage located in the curtilage of the Grade II listed Mill Cottage.

A short stretch of timber panel boundary fence is proposed to be installed in place of a section of an existing hedge, the insurance investigation raised concerns that the hedge root system was contributing to the structural issues due to the shallow foundations of the garage.

The garage is modern. This section of fence is not visible from the road as it is at the rear of the property. The fence will match the existing boarding on the back of the garage.

Recommend Approval

Motion: that Application DC/24/03337 be recommended for approval

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.



9. Receive report from the Clerk summarising a recent meeting with Babergh Council and a motion to exclude Water St from the charging arrangements.

The Clerk highlighted the key points included within the report emphasising that Babergh had not backtracked in any way. It is now envisaged that charging will not begin until January 2025.

Some further details had been agreed and proposals made:

- a) The hours of parking are confirmed as 8 am to 6pm every day of the week and charges will apply on Bank Holidays. The parking charges per hour and day are unchanged from those previously announced. Up to 2 hours parking will cost £1 and all day parking £2.50. Blue Badge holders will be allowed 3 hours free parking. £10 Coach Parking Fee.
- b) There will be no restriction for overnight parking except HGVs and staying in vehicles e.g. camper vans overnight.
- c) The concessionary parking is 2 free hours in the Church St car park for users of the Library, Pre-School, Community Centre and Surgery. It is intended that a machine will be installed in the Community Centre area however this is a matter for negotiation between the Community Council and the District Council. The availability of the machine on Farmers Market Sundays is a matter to be determined by the Community Council and the District Council.
- d) All visits less than 5 minutes are free, Enforcement Officer has to see an offence for 5 minutes.
- e) The annual parking permit is £95 or £50 for six months with free and unlimited changes in car registration numbers. It is a digital permit issued online with no residential requirements.
- f) The signage in Church St and Prentice St will be replaced by Babergh DC. Babergh has offered assistance with the design and installation of the parking signs permitting the PC to collect donations for the toilets.
- g) Babergh to consider (as part of signage project) landscaping of public area at entrance to Church St car park, Babergh to respond with proposal.
- h) The imposition of the car parking charges will make the operation of the public toilets loss making, currently the donations received are broadly equal to the toilet running costs incurred. Babergh agreed to consider a whether it wishes to making a financial contribution to these facilities or to take over the responsibility for clearing the Prentice St car park sewer.
- i) EV chargers in Prentice St: Babergh understands that the PC aims to enter the Connected Kerb arrangement promoted by Suffolk County Council, Babergh will aim to be helpful.

Babergh Officers however made it clear that the introduction of Water St is insufficiently profitable to Babergh to permit an inducement offer to the PC; however, the PC can ask Babergh to introduce parking controls to Water St, at a future date of its choosing, at no cost to the PC.

At the PC meeting held on 11th July 2024 the PC passed a motion saying that should Babergh introduce charges in the Church St and Prentice St Car Parks the PC will ask Babergh to introduce the same charges in Water St Car Park conditional on concluding satisfactory negotiations with Babergh to enhance the proposed mitigations and/or contribute to the maintenance of the Water St Car Park.

Cllr Lamont asked if Babergh had been clear that toilet donations would still be permitted. The Chair confirmed that they had been clear. Cllr Robinson asked if charging for the toilets had been considered. The Chair responded that it had not.

Motion: The Parish Council does not ask Babergh Council to include the Water St Car Park within its charging and parking enforcement arrangements. Any change to the Water St Car Park parking arrangements will require a further motion by the Parish Council.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Mitchell abstained.



10. Receive report from the Clerk summarising progress and timetable to Referendum Date and motion to approve spending on community publicity.

The Clerk outlined the likely timetable highlighting the costs associated with the LNP. He reported that the actual cost of holding the referendum will be paid by Babergh and that the costs incurred in 2024/25 to July 31 2024 inclusive of finalising the Plan are £220, the known additional costs to complete are £505. Further costs to finalise the Plan, he said, are unknown but are unlikely to be greater than several hundred pounds.

He explained that it is also necessary to print a summary document, to hold drop in sessions and otherwise inform Members of the Public of the upcoming referendum. Council, he said, had earmarked £2,000 for these costs in 2023/24 but had not passed a motion to spend this money.

Cllr Sherman expressed concern that the proposed gap between the delivery of the summary leaflet in early October and the referendum in late October was too short for people to properly consider the Plan. Voters he said might be on holiday for some of that period. Cllr Bourne repeated these concerns.

Cllr Mitchell said that she would report these concerns to the Neighbourhood Plan team. She added that all the correspondence and documents concerning the plan including the Examiners Report is online. Cllr Sherman said that some voters do not have access to the internet.

The Chair and the Clerk explained to Councillors that the District Council chooses the referendum date with the law requiring that the referendum must be held within 56 working days of the completion of the Babergh Council checks and not before 28 working days. The timetable included in the working papers is therefore indicative only with matters out of our hands in two ways, firstly waiting for Babergh to agree that all the modifications requested by the Examiner have been accurately incorporated and secondly at the conclusion of that process for Babergh to select the referendum date.

Cllr Bourne asked if the organisation of the delivery of the summary leaflets had been completed, the Chair replied that this is in progress.

Motion: The £2,000 earmarked for publicising the Neighbourhood Plan referendum is spent publicising the referendum in accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

Proposed: Cllr Morrey

Seconded: Cllr Mitchell

Decision: Approved, Cllrs Robinson and Sherman voted against the motion.

11. Receive Report from the Clerk summarising the latest correspondence concerning Lorry Signage from Suffolk Highways and a motion that the Parish Council approve the design and latest quotation from Suffolk Highways.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that at the Council meeting held on 9th May 2024 the following motion had been passed:

'to commission signage at a cost of £7,816 including VAT to be paid for by Neighbourhood CIL funds using Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 72 which permits Parish Councils the 'Power to provide traffic signs and other notices'.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the planned signs are:

RS1: A green sign at Bury Rd junction near Cockfield. Width 3m, Height 2.5m. The mounting height now clarified as 1.8m.

RS2: A blue sign High St by Ropers Ct. Width 1.1m, Height 1.5m, x height of letters 80mm. The mounting height now clarified as 2.5m.

He explained that the x-height is the measured height of the smaller lower-case letter that appears on the sign, such as an 'o', or 'n'. I.e. one that doesn't have an ascender/descender (as a 'b', 'k', 'p' or 'q').



RS3: A blue sign by 81 Church St. Width 1.1m, Height 1.5m, x height of letters 80mm. The mounting height now clarified as 2.1m.

RS4: By Bus Shelter, Swan Hotel west side, Width 1.2m, Height 0.8m, on existing post

RS5: Entrance to Water St. Height and Width 0.75m, on existing post.

Suffolk Highways he explained, having completed the detailed design. had informed the PC that the cost would now be £12,724.90 including VAT, the reason given was:

'I can advise that the increase in costs is mainly contributed to the sign on the A134 this is a large sign over (3m wide and 2.5m high) and due to the classification of the road/speed limit in line with our design guidelines this needs to be installed on passively safe posts (posts which reduce the risk of injury to vehicle passengers on collision) these are more expensive than galvanised posts used.

I should also point out the foundations once designed for this sign are also a considerable size when taking into consideration sign size/ wind loading stability etc therefore this has also increased the costs in material and disposal costs along with additional costs in time needed for traffic management to deliver and install this sign/s safely'.

Babergh Heritage had also written expressing concerns over the size of the signs in 'important vistas' and suggesting that sign RS3 be moved from outside 81 Church St to the east side of Church St outside the Parish Office. Suffolk Highways advise that the Babergh Heritage Officers report should be considered but has no legal weight.

County Councillor Lindsay had forwarded to the Clerk the complaints received some 5.5 years ago when the size of the weight restriction sign by the bus stop opposite Water Street was increased leading it then being shrunk.

The Clerk suggested a non-exhaustive list of matters for Councillors to consider:

- a) Increase in cost
- b) The size and mounting heights of the blue signs RS2 and RS3, these signs are width 1.1m, height 1.5m, mounting heights 2.5m and 2.1m respectively.
- c) The history of increasing the sign size at the junction of Water St and High St.
- d) The suggestion of moving RS3 to outside the Parish Office. Water St would then not be the first right and the signage outside the Parish Office is already cluttered and it is highly likely Babergh will add further Car Park signs at that location.
- e) The need for effective signage and the balancing of heritage interests
- f) The status of the Babergh Heritage Officers advice as advised by Suffolk Highways.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for all the work that had gone into the paper.

Cllr Robinson asked what the enforcement was going to be for lorries ignoring the signs. Cllr Mitchell replied that often the problem was that lorries cannot see the signs at Water St due to obstruction by stopped buses and delivery vehicles and so the need is for larger signs at that junction but also for earlier warning signs. She argued that the proposed signage will improve matters. Suffolk County Council, she said, had asked for increased enforcement powers but currently had very limited powers. Enforcement she said will come in time, the local Police will in the interim do spot checks. She acknowledged that enforcement would initially be weak.

Cllr Sherman explained that he had been a lorry driver for many years and said that lorry drivers will follow their satnavs and not follow signs. He reported most have ordinary car sat navs, not lorry satnavs, as they are very significantly cheaper. The number of new signs he said should be reduced.

Cllr Mitchell reported that many had told her that their houses shake when the lorries go past and that something needed to be done to try and reduce the number of lorries going down High St, Church St and Water St.



Cllr Lamont said that he thought the proposed Bury Rd sign was a big improvement, giving more information to drivers.

Cllr Morrey deplored the proposed two blue signs describing them as inappropriate to their settings. She welcomed the green Bury Rd sign. Cllrs Lamont and Robinson agreed with Cllr Morrey. Cllr Morrey said that she supported the improved signs for the junction of Water St.

Cllr Bourne asked if the green sign could be purchased now and the other signs at a later date if required. The Clerk replied that all options were available.

Cllrs Mitchell and Sherman questioned whether the blue signs could be moved further away from the village core. The Chair said that the Clerk could approach Highways and ask that question.

Motion: that the Parish Council notes the advice of the Babergh Heritage Officer and the mitigations suggested by Suffolk Highways but proceeds with the design as detailed in Appendix 2 at a cost of £10,604 plus VAT to be paid for by Neighbourhood CIL funds using Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, section 72 which permits Parish Councils the 'Power to provide traffic signs and other notices'.

Amendment to the motion: so that it reads 'that the Parish Council ask Suffolk Highways to quote only for the sign on the Bury Rd'.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved. Cllr Mitchell abstained.

Amendment to the motion: so that it reads 'that the Parish Council ask Suffolk Highways to quote only for the sign on the Bury Rd and the signs at the junction with Water St and asks Highways if the blue signs could be located further from the village core'.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont

Seconded: Cllr Mitchell

Decision: Rejected, Cllrs Lamont and Mitchell voted in favour of it, all other Councillors voted against.

The Clerk explained that these lorry signage decisions could be voted on again in six months.

12. Clerk/RFO Report

Update concerning the Public Realm:

He reported to Councillors that the Speed Indicator Device had been delivered but with missing installation parts, the missing parts had now been supplied, the aim is to install shortly.

The Jubilee tree plaques have been installed and the Meadow Close grit bin replaced. The soil fertilisation and the pest control visits of the Box Bushes have both been carried out. Two replacement Dog Bins are on order. The telephone boxes will be collected for refurbishment on Thursday 12th September. No further correspondence has been received from Suffolk County Council concerning the cancellation of the Pump Alley light other than very graceful response to our notice of cancellation.

The Parish Council has asked its contractors to cut back the Potland Lane verge and the areas rewilded for the summer. Babergh has confirmed that it will do the same with respect to its areas in Tenterpiece and Spring St. After they are cut and cleared, they will then be left unmown until the spring, when they will get an initial cut at the start of the mowing season before again being left until late summer / early autumn – this helps support some insects during the winter months. Mown strips around the edges will still be mown as required to help define the areas.

The JPB green areas and street cleaning contract expires April 1st 2024. The Clerk will be working with Councillors to reconsider the scope of the contract which, due to its size, must be publicly advertised.

There have been no further sewerage problems in the Prentice Street car park but a number of litter bins across the village have been overflowing during the summer months.



Update concerning the External Auditors Report and Insurance:

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor's report was unqualified and that the required Notice of Public Rights was displayed 5th August 2024 to 29th August 2024.

He reminded Councillors that the Internal Auditor's Report highlighted that the Parish Council did not have Fidelity Insurance and that the Council's insurance policies expire each year on August 31st. The Council's previous insurers (NFU) do not offer this cover.

Prior to renewal he had obtained two additional quotes for insurance including, where possible, Fidelity cover.

The existing insurers quoted £2,117 (£1,831 in 2023/24) not including Fidelity cover.

Gallagher indicated that the annual insurance including Fidelity Cover would be over £4,000 and Community Action Suffolk quoted £2,630.

The Community Action Suffolk quotation has been accepted (although it can be cancelled as there is a 14 day cooling off period) because it contains the following enhancements:

- 1) It is a policy specifically designed for Parish Councils rather than a Property Insurance based policy adapted as much as possible to meet the needs of a Parish Council.
- 2) £500,000 Fidelity Cover, £250,000 legal expenses cover and £100,000 cover for each of a) Trustees and Directors indemnity and b) Libel and Slander

Motion: That the External Auditors Report is noted and that the quotation for insurance provided by Community Action Suffolk is accepted.

Proposed: Cllr Morrey

Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Received: The reports prepared by the Clerk containing the July 2024 Accounts.

Noted from the Report: The Clerk explained that the key variances to Budget were unbudgeted car parking donations and minor savings on a number of expenditure lines. Donation and Burial Incomes are both below previous levels.

Motion: to approve the accounts for the month ended 31 July 2024.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Received: The report prepared by the Clerk listing the July 2024 Receipts and Payments.

Noted from the Report: The Clerk explained the larger amounts and how the report ties up to the Bank Statements. No receipts or payments required further explanation.

Motion: to approve the Receipts and Payments for the month ended 31 July 2024

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

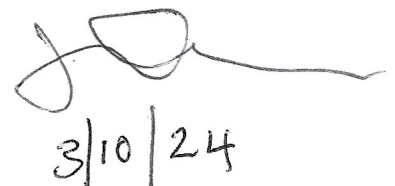
Seconded: Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 3rd October 2024 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.36pm.



3/10/24