

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 6th November 2025, commencing at 7pm in the Village Hall.
*Full reports and supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings.
November 2025 Meeting Pack.*

Present:

Chair: Cllr Janice Muckian. Cllrs: Alison Bourne, Frank Domoney (from 7.07 pm), Iain Lamont, Roy Mawford, Irene Mitchell, Jane Ranzetta, Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Nine 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 this 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 and were reminded to treat all present with respect.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

The Clerk reported that Cllr Falconer was not present and had sent her apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ranzetta said that if her Disclosable Pecuniary Interest was discussed at any point in the Planning Discussions that she would leave the room. The Clerk replied that no matters concerning her Disclosable Pecuniary Interest were on the Agenda. The Clerk invited Councillors to declare any interests, none were declared.

3. Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk reported that he had received no further requests for dispensations.

5. Approval of Minutes

To approve as accurate minutes of the October 2nd 2025 meeting of the Council

The Chair reminded Councillors that the draft minutes and the recording of the meeting had been available to Councillors for four weeks commenting that no Councillor had used the period to express any concerns with respect to the minutes.

Cllr Robinson said that the Clerk had received an email concerning the minutes. The Chair replied that this email was from a Member of the Public who, to her recall, had not suggested that the minutes were inaccurate. Cllr Robinson said that minutes contained assumptions. Cllr Bourne said that she considered that the minutes did not accurately reflect what had happened. The Chair asked Cllr Bourne why she had not raised these concerns in the last four weeks. Cllr Bourne replied that she had been busy.

Cllr Sherman said that the minutes did not reflect the tone of the meeting and that the minutes did not reflect what happened. The Chair asked why he had not raised these concerns in the last four weeks. Cllr Sherman replied that he was questioning these minutes in the same way that the Chair had, at the last meeting queried minutes and that he considered raising his queries at this meeting the right thing to do. The Chair responded that she had queried minutes of the LNP Group not Council minutes. Cllr Sherman said that Minutes did not reflect the meeting and that Members of the Public had told him that they considered the Minutes not to be reflective of the Meeting.

Cllr Lamont proposed that the Minutes be accepted. No seconder was forthcoming.



The Chair asked Cllrs Bourne, Robinson and Sherman to write to the Clerk in the next week with their concerns about the factual accuracy of the minutes. Cllr Sherman said that he considered that the minutes needed to be completely rewritten to represent the meeting which had been held. He said the minutes were not a true recording what was said. The Chair reminded all that the minutes were not a verbatim transcript agreeing that they did need to be a true record.

Cllr Domoney apologised for his late arrival and entered the room.

6. 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. She explained that the Standing Orders of the Council are clear that this public session is for ten minutes and that it is at the discretion of the Chair whether further time is allowed or the session shortened.

A Member of the Public explained that he was speaking on behalf of a long established Group of volunteers who open and close the Chapel to enable Members of the Public to light a candle and enjoy a period of contemplation. He explained that the number of volunteers was now insufficient to open and close the chapel each day. He appealed to Councillors to volunteer and the Council and Councillors to publicise the need for volunteers. He expressed concerns that, through a lack of hot water, it was difficult to clean the floor. Cllr Mitchell suggested that the Group might also like to contact the Church to seek volunteers. Councillor Robinson offered to be a volunteer saying that he would see if he could help with the floor cleaning issue.

A Member of the Public thanked the Clerk for getting Suffolk Highways for reducing the size of some of the trees on the High St. He asked if the Clerk could ask Suffolk Highways to reduce the size of the trees on the opposite side of the street and on Lower Rd.

6. Chair's Announcements

The Chair informed Councillors that:

The Hub:

Ms Lee Morris has advised the Trustees of the Hub and this Council that she is stepping down from running the Hub. She thanked Ms Morris for her work over the years.

The Parish Clerk has agreed to take on the role of book-keeper. New Trustees for the Hub would be welcomed. Members of the Public and Councillors may put themselves forward as a Trustee.

Babergh Cleaning Grant:

After meeting with the Clerk and Chair Babergh Council has agreed to an extra year (2027/2028) at half money, worth £7,000. No other Councils effected by the changes had protested to Babergh each having considered Babergh's financial position. This Council had pointed out that we have a three year contract to honour to provide these services.

Tourism/ footfall:

Footfall data: there is still no full explanation from Babergh Council of the apparent inconsistencies in the data provided. The Clerk continues to seek full explanations.

In response to suggestions that coaches have deleted Lavenham from their itineraries Babergh is attempting to confirm with any coach companies visiting Lavenham whether the £10 charge is discouraging visits to Lavenham.

Babergh has advised that 31 PCNs for on- street parking infringement were issued between February and July 2025 as compared to 28 in the same months in 2024.

Leases:

Draft Leases have been received for our Office and Parish Toilets. The Clerk has sent these back querying whether the leases are internal repairing only leases as described in the Heads of Terms.

Mary Morrey:

A number of Councillors had attended Mary Morrey's memorial service. The Chair reflected that it had been a privilege to attend this very moving service, to meet Mary's family and learn more about her life.

The Notice of Election to replace Mary has been posted. Should there not be a call for an Election then Council will both co-opt and elect a vice Chair at the December Meeting. The Clerk will extensively publish the vacancy should Council be in a position to co-opt.

Remembrance Sunday:

A brief reminder that on Sunday that, as in previous years, there will be a parade and wreath laying in Market Place at 9.30 am followed by a Remembrance Service in the Church at 10.00.

Cllr Sherman advised that because of overseas service commitments attendance at this years' service from Armed Forces personnel will be less than in other years. He urged Councillors and Members of the Public to attend.

Cllr Sherman thanked the Chair for her recent action to get the Prentice St toilets cleaned following inappropriate defecation by Member(s) of the Public.

7. Local Authority Councillors' Reports

District Cllr Clover explained to Councillors the very different forecasts of the costs of the two proposals (one unitary Council or three) prepared by the District Councils and Suffolk County Council. He commented that if the three unitaries can show how they will unlock the suggested £67.5m in annual savings by localising Adult and Children's services then that 'would change the whole landscape'.

He informed Councillors that he and District Cllr Maybury have objected to Suffolk County Council plans build out the pedestrian island, in Sudbury, at the Melford Road Junction with Gainsborough Road and Girling Street on the basis of cost (£220,000) and necessity.

Voluntary, community, faith, social organisations (VCFSE) are invited to attend a summit from the Babergh grants and funding team in order to learn more how to access various grants and funding. The event will be held on Wednesday 19th November at Chamberlin Hall, Bildeston from 9am to 2.30pm. Admission is free but reservations must be booked prior online.

The Living Well in Winter Grant Scheme has now closed to new applications but any business looking to be more sustainable, diversify their offering or attract more visitors can apply for funding of up to £10k (£15k if projects strongly focus on net zero or farm diversification) from the Rural Business Growth Fund. Full details are to be found on the Heart of Suffolk website.

County Cllr Lindsay spoke of the role he had played in getting Suffolk County Council to reduce the size of the trees on the High St which had been causing property damage.

He had been asked by a Member of the Public what can be done about overgrowth on the western part of the old railway path running to Long Melford, where it runs beside Lineage Wood. The Public Rights of Way Officer has explained that this has never been a public footpath and the landowner has no duty to maintain access. Suffolk Wildlife Trust is in talks with the landowner about adopting the path as a public right of way, as part of the Defra funded "Connecting Constable and Gainsborough Country" landscape recovery project.

Suffolk County Council is predicting that it will overspend by £20.4m by the end of the 2025/26 financial year, which it will balance by taking money from its Risk Reserve.

Cllr Domoney spoke of the amount of work which would be required to clear the undergrowth on the path.



8. Planning Register

The Clerk informed Cllrs that he had one update to the published document. Council had very recently been informed that Babergh has granted Planning Permission of application 457 which was for Earthworks at the Paddocks. This approval was neither in agreement or contrary to PC recommendation as the PC had expressed no opinion on this application.

He noted that all Babergh Council October decisions were in accordance with this Council recommendations except for Application 3906 at Pedlars Way where permission had been granted for an Ash tree to be felled. He commented that such differences with respect to trees are a recurring theme.

He told Cllrs that there are now three applicants appealing to the Planning Inspector. The properties involved are Toll Cottage, the Rectory and the proposed Wellness Centre.

9. Planning Applications

DC/25/4304 The Grove. Fell Willow Tree.

Cllr Lamont explained that the Planning Group considered that willow trees can be pruned hard and recover well. Felling should be the last option. The Group proposes that the tree is pruned back to reduce or remove the strain on the weak fork.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends refusal of Application DC/25/4304.

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/4183 One Bell House, 46 High St. Addition of a first floor Juliet Balcony to rear elevation and replacement of existing rotten windows with wood effect uPVC.

Cllr Lamont explained that this application is for works to a building in the conservation area, which is not listed. The new first floor window and Juliet balcony face to the rear and are not visible from the street. The side window would be visible from Parmenter Walk, but would not be obtrusive and would be uPVC sash windows to match existing style. We would prefer wooden framed windows.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Application DC/25/4183 but would prefer that the replacement windows are wooden framed.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Mitchell **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/4660 Saffron Pane, Hall Rd. Fell silver birch tree.

Cllr Lamont explained that this property is in the conservation area but is not listed. The tree is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The Planning Group recognises that the tree has decay and so understands that it needs to be felled recommending that a replacement tree is planted.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends refusal of application DC/25/4660 recommending that a replacement tree be planted.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Domoney **Decision:** Approved unanimously..

DC/25/4532 Teazle Cottage, 30 Water St. Installation of Fibre Optic cabling.

Cllr Lamont explained that this application will have negligible impact on a listed building.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Application DC/25/4532.

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/4396 Pegtile Court, 3 Church St. Application for Listed Building Consent. Installation of a temporary stairlift within the property.

Cllr Lamont explained that this building is listed and is in the Conservation Area. The Stairlift will be attached to the staircase and not affect the structure of the building. It is a temporary installation.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Application DC/25/4396

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/4341 and 4342 Market House, 35 Market Place. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for demolition of dilapidated lean-to shed and replacement with lean-to greenhouse.

Cllr Lamont explained that property is listed and in the Conservation area in close proximity to the Grade 1 listed Guildhall and so is in a sensitive location.

The proposed lean-to greenhouse occupies the same footprint and location as the old shed and is of a traditional style and would be painted Heritage White to match Market House. The Heritage Officer has no objection.

The Planning Group considers that this is an appropriate improvement to the setting of a listed building and is compliant with the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan policy D1. It is behind the property, and although visible from Lady Street at an oblique angle, does not affect the setting of other buildings in the vicinity so can be considered to be compliant to policy ENV1 and ENV2.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Applications DC/25/4341 and 4342.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/4033 and 4034 The Hall, Hall Rd, Proposed replacement entrance gates.

Cllr Lamont explained that the current gates are not original, the proposed gates will give increased security and privacy.

The Heritage Officer has written suggesting that the height of the proposed gates be reduced as the existing views into the former farmyard positively contribute to the appreciation of the curtilage listed stable buildings and the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

Cllr Mitchell said that the proposed gates are suitable considering the recent successful application for the conversion of the stables to residential use.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Applications DC/25/4033 and 4034.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman **Decision:** Approved unanimously. Cllrs Domoney, Mawford and Ranzetta abstained.

DC/25/4724 9 Trinity Gild, Notice of Works to Trees.

Council notes that the trees are not covered by Tree Protection Orders but are in the Conservation Area. Council notes that a number of the trees are diseased and that many of the trees are in an extremely limited space in the rear garden. Council recommends that the application is approved.

Motion: that the Parish Council recommends approval of Application DC/25/4724

Proposed: Cllr Robinson **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Sherman abstained.

Planning Appeal DC/25/00067 The Old Rectory. Addition of painted timber, pedimented doorcase surrounding the existing front door, architrave and cushion mould which are retained.

Cllr Lamont explained that Babergh DC will forward the PCs original comments to the Planning Inspector unless the PC chooses to amend those comments. Cllr Sherman said that he considered the matter already determined by Council.

Motion: that the Clerk writes to the Planning Inspectorate confirming the previously issued comments.

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell **Seconded:** Cllr Mawford **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Robinson voted against.

Cllr Lamont reported that Application 03618 with respect to the Poultry Farm had been withdrawn and that a replacement application had been agreed by Babergh Council as being 'Permitted Development'.

10. Repair to Churchyard wall

The Clerk explained that in late September 2025 Rev Simon Pitcher had showed the Clerk damage to the front wall of the Churchyard. The Clerk asked whether the Church, would through the contacts of Mr David Deacon, be able to obtain quotes for the repair.



Consequently Mr David Deacon has very helpfully provided two quotes from local businesses for the repair. The quotes are for £875 and £895.

The Clerk explained that Council could make an insurance claim for this. The excess is £100 or so.

The Clerk said that an insurance claim is not the preferred action as any claim would likely result in higher future premiums, would certainly delay the works and that since in many ways the Church is the custodian of this important site it is extremely important that they are happy with the quality of the work.

He expressed concern that making an insurance claim might lead to a cheaper non-local contractor being asked to do the work so reducing the level of supervision concerning the quality of the work that Mr Deacon and the Church are able to exert.

Cllr Sherman commented that under the Insurance Policy the Insurers would need notifying and so the Insurance premium would still rise. The Clerk agreed that the insurance company would still need notifying. Cllr Domoney asked if the vehicle which had caused the damage is known. The Clerk replied that the vehicle is unknown. The Clerk explained that the wall was legally the responsible of the Parish Council.

Motion: That Council asks Mr Deacon to engage one of the Contractors who have quoted at a maximum cost of £1,000.

Proposed: Cllr Ranzetta **Seconded:** Cllr Domoney **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Sherman voted against.

Closed Church Yards: Power to maintain LGA 1972 , s.215.

11. Tree Maintenance:

The Clerk explained that the tree surveys had now been updated and that the Councils retained contractor had submitted quotes for some £16,000 of work some of which was urgently required for safety reasons.

He explained to Councillors that he had, since preparing the working papers received additional correspondence from the Contractor.

The Contractor had offered a discount, reflecting operational efficiencies, of some £1,500 should all the work be commissioned.

The Contractor had also advised that the last tree survey was done 9 years ago and considering the number of trees in the Parish it would be prudent to have a new survey carried out every 10 years and all of the trees logged and recorded.

Noting that the Parish Council has already done more than most Parish Councils in having the initial survey done and having the local Contractor over the years briefly inspect the trees annually (all be it with a recent three year gap) they commented that:

- a) They are more than happy to continue to look at these annually for Council and carry out a visual inspection and then update the Survey and, being a Lavenham based business, happy to do this free of charge.
- b) The current Survey that they are working off is now quite out of date, some of the trees have been removed and all have grown considerably.
- c) They are predominantly a tree works company specialising in actual tree works and don't have the mapping facilities or licences to plot the trees onto a registered map.
- d) Although qualified to inspect trees and having over 35 years of experience, carrying out large scale tree surveys is not what the Company is set up to do.

They recommended Haydens Arboricultural Consultants who are based in Bury St Edmunds saying that they would be able to carry out an up-to-date survey that will be more detailed and be a better basis from which to manage the tree stock. They would be more than happy to update this each year so the tree survey would not be an annual cost. Haydens has provided a quote of a little over £3,000 to do this work.

He explained that Councillors could take many approaches to the issues at hand; one possible approach would be to amend the motion to ask the Contractor to do the urgent safety related work now and ask the Clerk to obtain three quotes for a Tree Survey.

The Clerk explained that the urgent work is:

First Meadow:

Maintenance of Trees overhanging Play Area: £2,200 including hire of Mobile Elevated Platform.
Fell dead Silver Birch adjacent to Footpath: £600.

Cemetery:

Fell dead Scots Pine: £1,200 including hire of Mobile Elevated Platform.

Total £4,000

The Clerk explained that there will be lots about money next month when we set the Precept but the big summary is that our Financial position is dominated by whether NCIL monies are used for the Neighbourhood Plan and Tree Maintenance. He said that ultimately the question is whether we are going to use Babergh's money for these items or our own.

Should NCIL be used for all those costs then the loss for the year will be between £10,000 and £15,000. The forecast loss was £10,000. If NCIL is not used for these items then the loss somewhat depends on timing of expenditure on the trees and Neighbourhood Plan but it could very easily be over £30,000.

Cllr Robinson said that Council should see what Grants are available for doing some work. The Chair said Council needed to be mindful of the immediate safety issues.

Cllr Domoney commented that any decision needed to consider the upcoming Central Government budget which might have deleterious effects on Local Government finances.

Cllr Mitchell agreed with the thoughts of both Cllr Robinson and the Chair saying that dangerous areas need fencing off. Cllr Domoney agreed that fencing off would be required and offered to regularly inspect the fencing.

In answer to a question from Cllr Robinson the Clerk corrected himself and confirmed that the urgent work required use of Mobile Elevated platform would be required for work in both the Cemetery and First Meadow.

Cllrs Mawford and Ranzetta said that the safety work was urgently required.

Motion to amend the Motion to read

'Council suspends Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 11.1 h) having considered the reasons for and against the selection of this supplier and having considered the assessment of the risks arising from the appointment of the proposed supplier consequent of the procurement process followed.

Council approves the appointment of Suffolk Tree Services to carry out the urgent safety related work to First Meadow and the Cemetery at a cost of £4,000'.

The Clerk agreed to obtain further quotes for Surveys and to report to Council concerning the availability of Grants.

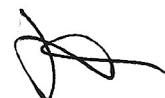
Cllr Sherman said that he did not support the suspension of Standing Orders. Council needed to protect itself from questions as to why only quote had been obtained. He pointed out that the Financial Regulations require three quotes. Describing this as 'a lesser of two evils' Cllr Domoney suggested this was an emergency situation and so no precedent was set.

Motion: That the Motion is amended.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Mawford **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Robinson and Sherman voted against.

Motion: That the amended motion is passed,

Proposed: Cllr Mitchell **Seconded:** Cllr Mawford **Decision:** Approved. Cllr Sherman abstained.



12. Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Group

The Chair of the LNP Group reported that four Councillors had written with queries concerning the proposed Questionnaire and that the LNP Group had, as detailed in the LNP Group Minutes, accepted some of the queries. The Group, he explained, had accepted the points that it considered would enhance the Questionnaire and now intended to send the Questionnaire out in February.

Cllr Mitchell described the LNP Group minutes as having being written in 'a controversial and challenging style'. She said that she wondered whether the LNP recognised that the PC was the Qualifying Body and that the PC had the responsibility to question and comment on the contents of surveys. She asked the LNP Group to remember that it is bound by its Terms of Reference including the Code of Conduct. She said that she considered some of the references in the minutes fell short of showing courtesy and respect. She thanked the Group for considering and taking on board a number of her comments on the Questionnaire. She said that some points raised by Cllrs had not been fully addressed and could be considered during further drafts of the Questionnaire as part of making sure that the Qualifying Body and the LNP Group are jointly satisfied with the outcome of the work.

Cllr Mawford said that he considered that the decision making body is the Parish Council and that the process finalising the Questionnaire needs to be one of drafting and redrafting. He said that the LNP Group owed all Councillors who had commented a formal reply item by item. Cllr Mawford expressed interest in the remark, contained in the LNP3 Group minutes, that the school is full to capacity. Cllr Sherman said, in response, that the Review Group had met with the Head Teacher noting that County Council funding is available for school development. Suffolk, he said will build a new school and the LNP Group wants the school to be in Lavenham.

Cllr Mawford said that, in his opinion, the best available Housing Requirement Target figure must be included in the opening paragraphs of the Questionnaire. He considered that it was not sensible to survey Members of the Public without telling Members of the Public the current target. He suggested the Questionnaire should be delayed until the Local Development Plan is further progressed and the context in which the Neighbourhood Plan is going to have to exist is clearer.

Cllr Domoney said that he was very impressed by the draft of the survey describing it as comprehensive and covering most of the required issues and that he did not want progress to be bogged down by 'dotting i's and crossing t's'.

Cllr Mitchell said that the Babergh Briefing Document issued in March 2025 is clear that the Babergh Housing target is 775 houses per year for the next twenty years and that the Lavenham target for the whole period is a net gain of 367 houses. She asked why the Review Group had not shared that information with the Lavenham Public when the guidance contained in the Babergh document recommends sharing this information.

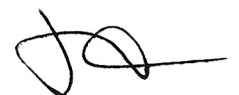
Cllr Sherman said that target may change and has already changed eight times. He was asked what the current Lavenham target was. He replied that the last number he had seen for the Lavenham twenty year target was 700 homes. He said that the LNP Group could not give a figure in the Questionnaire as it was constantly changing. Cllr Mitchell replied that from her experience of LNP2 should the Qualifying Body not follow Babergh guidance then the Lavenham NP the LNP will not pass.

Cllr Domoney said that Cllr Sherman is working with considerable uncertainty and should go ahead now with the best available data which may need updating in due course. The Chair said that this data should be shared now. Cllr Sherman said that publishing such data would 'frighten them off' and that it was only raw data.

Cllr Mitchell replied that this was not raw data, the number was Babergh extrapolating its target across the communities and that Babergh had instructed the Parish Council to work with these numbers.

Cllr Robinson said that there was not the workforce to build these houses and the Government was making poor progress. He said that the Government had only managed to build 1,000 properties. The Chair suggested the LNP Group have a meeting with the PC, the PC being the Qualifying body.

Cllr Sherman said that he had not written the minutes which Cllr Mitchell had criticised. He explained that the minutes had been written by the Group's Secretary. The Chair replied that the Chair was responsible for the minutes of the LNP Group. Cllr Sherman acknowledged this.



Cllr Sherman said that the LNP Group had set out what it is prepared to do, the Group would not redo the Questionnaire until the PC has agreed that it will accept that redone version of the Questionnaire.

The Chair said that a revised Questionnaire was required for Councillors to consider.

Cllr Ranzetta intervened saying that the Chair, Cllr Mitchell, every individual at the table, had made really good points. All want the best for Lavenham. She said that every time there is a Neighbourhood Plan discussion it ended up being difficult with mudslinging, nasty comments, Cllrs taking umbrage throwing stuff across the room and Cllrs getting 'huffy and puffy'. Cllrs she said need to 'grow up'. She said that this must stop.

Cllr Mitchell reminded Cllrs that the Chair, a few minutes previously, had suggested a meeting with the LNP Group to iron things out, Cllr Ranzetta agreed with Cllrs Mitchells recollection and the suggestion.

Cllr Domoney suggested the drafting of a caveated document and the approach of successive approximation i.e. the gradual finalising of the document. Cllr Lamont saying that he had spent much of his life drafting and redrafting documents with the reason for each change documented and that the LNP Group needed to adopt this approach. Council, he said, needed to see a next draft.

The Chair said Council will now do its best to arrange a meeting with members of the LNP Group.

13. Use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy

The Clerk told Cllrs that the PC has £63,000 of such funds, £6,000 is committed to Green Willows Streetlight. Of the remaining £57,000 £36,000 expires in April 2028 and £21,000 expires in April 2029.

Babergh Guidance is that 'if the PC does not spend their CIL within 5 years of receipt the Infrastructure team may send the PC a repayment notice and the District will spend the CIL income on their behalf and in consultation with the PC. Exceptions may be made if the PC can show they have allocated their CIL income to a particular project for which they are accumulating funds before spending'. Additionally, the PC must spend the CIL income they received from the District 'on the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure'

He commented that Councillors need to be aware that some projects take much time, particularly projects involving other bodies e.g. Suffolk Highways and the need to spend the funds by April 2029.

He explained that the purpose of this exercise is to understand Councillors spending priorities and to help the Clerk prepare the 2026/27 Budget and Precept. He invited Cllrs to add projects to the list.

Cllr Robinson said that he considered that Council could not consider this now as the spending on the Neighbourhood Plan had not been finalised. The discussion, he said must be delayed. The Clerk replied that he had never heard a single Councillor say that the village did not need a Neighbourhood Plan and that the debate was about the details of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Mawford said that he agreed there needs to be a Neighbourhood Plan by 2031, that the budget put forward was reasonable and that in his opinion it should be financed via Neighbourhood Cil. He asked that subsidies for Community Transport/Buses be added as an option. The Clerk agreed to this.

Cllrs spoke of their preferences. See Appendix A.

Motion: to extend meeting by 15 minutes. **Proposed:** Cllr Muckian **Seconded:** Cllr Mitchell. Approved. Cllrs Robinson and Sherman voted against.

14. Clerks Report

Motions: To approve Accounts and Receipts and Payments for month ending 30th September 2025

Proposed: Cllr Ranzetta **Seconded:** Cllr Mawford **Decisions:** Approved unanimously

Meeting ended 9.33pm Date of next meeting – Thursday 4th December 2025 7pm

J. Muckian
4/12/25

