

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 4th June 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 A Norman, Mrs M Morrey, Mr T Sheppard, Mr B Panton, Dr C Posner, Mr I Lamont, Mr P Grindley.

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

2 members of the public.

Public Forum – none of the members of the public wished to speak.

Police Matters – Go to

https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_june_-_online.pdf for the June 2020 copy of the County newsletter, Constable's County. The newsletter provides an update on policing during the present pandemic.

The summary of crimes reported within the parish of Lavenham, listed on www.police.uk, shows that there have been 9 reported crimes for the month of April, Criminal Damage & Arson x 2; Public Order x 2; Burglary x 1; Other Theft x 1; Vehicle Crime x 1; Other Crime x 2.

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

Mr Lindsay gave a verbal update on his circulated report.

Mr Lindsay and Mr O'Mahony had had a very productive meeting with officers who had addressed all points raised in the Parish Council's response to the Water Street trial and appear keen to progress to a permanent scheme. Before the next meeting it is hoped that costings will be available for such additional items as signing from the Cockfield junction and at entrances to the village. The sign on the junction of Church Street and Water Street will be replaced with the larger original sign as the present small sign is being ignored by many drivers of large vehicles. The Parish Council has asked for a copy of the SCC responses to the points raised in its comments on the various parts of the trial and also a copy of the 2015 survey.

Design details and how to implement the scheme will be decided with reference to similar traffic management schemes in the County which are sympathetic to local architecture, also how costs will be allocated between the County and Parish Council.

At the moment there is no more to say on Lavenham Walk, Andrew Reid has been emailed with a request for a remote meeting in order to progress discussions.

Update on exclusion of public from (Suffolk County) Council online meetings, following a complaint to the Chief Executive the public will now be allowed to phone in to Development and Regulation Committee meetings.

Mrs Twitchett asked what steps would be taken to open up the route leading north off Clay Lane if the request to revive the old highway as a restricted byway was granted. Would this involve the clearing of trees and hedges which had grown on this neglected route? She agreed with the adjacent landowner, that this would involve the removal of a valuable natural habitat for a rich variety of animals and birds. Mr Lindsay could not comment on whether the claim would be successful, the footpaths team would make the decision based on evidence.

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

Mrs Maybury had emailed a report which had been circulated. It was confirmed that the problems on Mud Lane had been resolved.

Mr Arthey said that as the car parks are not leased to the Parish Council the CIL

application has been passed to Babergh.

Peter Garrett's views regarding reopening the toilets had been received today, it was hoped that Lavenham's would be the first to reopen but there would have to be Legionella testing which might mean a fortnight's delay.

A survey of the land off Brent Eleigh Road was being carried out, there is a pre-application enquiry going on. He will keep the Parish Council informed as he knows more.

There was a report of a car possibly abandoned on a grassed area at Meadow Close, Mrs Maybury said she would take this up if more information could be sent to her.

There are three big projects ongoing which depend for funding on CIL bids and the timing of payments, but reserves could be utilised until outstanding CIL payments came through.

The Minutes – Prop. by Dr Posner, sec. by Mr Sheppard, the minutes of the meeting held on 7th May 2020 were approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none

Apologies for absence - Mr Macro

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues – the meeting of the Finance working group had not yet taken place due to pressure to prepare and submit the CIL bids.

Finance and Strategy

Invoices paid between meetings:

Birketts LLB, professional charges in respect of former Gas Works £1,278.00

Cheques for payment:

JPB Landscapes, (May grass cutting £928.75, street cleaning £1,253.33) £2,618.50: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Kinex, phone account May £37.82: Payroll £730.27: Cartridge Discount, printer inks £86.59: Fox Cars, Covid 19 compliant taxi journeys to hospital (arranged via Good Neighbour Scheme and covered by Babergh grant) £144.00: British Gas, electricity supply to Church Street toilets £17.26: Anglian Water Business, Church Street toilets water charges £206.20: Anglian Water Business, Prentice Street toilets water charges £203.27.

In answer to questions raised the Clerk explained that i) Anglian Water and the electricity supply companies had not been informed regarding the closure of the public toilets as they could be re-opened at short notice. Estimated bills continue to be paid as adjustment will be made when the meters are read again, ii) Birketts charges are for early stage advice in negotiations with NG in respect of the old Gas Works site, iii) Dr Posner was pleased to see that the Parish Council had been able to pay Covid compliant taxi fares to hospital appointments booked through the GNS which would be covered by the grant from Babergh.

A letter to the Bank requests the transfer of £5,000.00 between accounts.

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

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/20/01839 Pippins, Bridge Street Road, Lavenham

Notification of Works to Trees Under Tree Preservation Order WS240/G1 - G2. (Maples) To

reduce the two previously reduced maples in this section to the previous points (removing about 2 foot)

DC/20/01858 Ground Floor, 6 Market Place, Lavenham

Application for Listed Building Consent - Reinstate original front door to 6 Market Place

Following consideration of the recommendations made by the Planning working group it was proposed by Dr Posner, seconded by Mr Grindley, that approval should be recommended in both applications. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/20/01138 Land South Of Howlett Of Lavenham, Melford Road, Lavenham - Discharge of Condition for DC/17/03100 - Condition 12 (Fire Hydrants)

DC/20/01396 Plot 2 Land Adjoining Windwards, Bury Road, Lavenham – permission for removal or variation of a condition under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act for approved DC/19/04285 granted 19.11.2019 - Condition 2 - Approved Plans and documents DC/20/00697 . The Black Barn, Hall Road, Lavenham – planning permission granted for alterations and two storey extension of existing two storey structure. Conversion of first floor to form 4no apartments. Subdivision of existing B1a Unit to form 2no B1a Units and extension of existing Sui-generis Unit

DC/20/01234 6 Bolton Street, Lavenham – planning permission granted for erection of a first floor rear extension

Larger householder extension - DC/20/01427 The Granary, Mill Hill, Bury Road, Lavenham Proposal: Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a Proposed Larger Home Extension - Erection of a single storey rear extension.

Please note that this letter represents the (District) Council's formal response to this application.

I refer to the above formal notification received 7 April 2020. I have considered the information submitted and conclude that your development is not eligible under the prior notification procedures as it does not comply with the following criteria: 1. The site is not yet occupied and is not lawfully in use, therefore Permitted Development Rights are not available. The proposal fails to accord with the criteria set out within Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended. Due to this failure to comply with Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended, the proposal is considered to require formal approval for the works to take place. In the absence of permitted development rights, a full planning application is required for the proposed works.

The Council therefore gives notice that it refuses the application DC/20/01427 as submitted. Please note, in the event that a planning application is submitted it will be determined on its own merits and in accordance with national and local plan policies

Operations

Former Gas Works Site – the consultants have written to Paribas to arrange a site meeting, the question around the interceptor tank is the only thing holding up progress. Mr O'Mahony will try to move things along. The original quotes for works are fixed for six months but will be reviewed anyway. Mrs Norman asked if the quotes received could be circulated around the Operations working group,

Prentice Street car park – the CIL bid went in 10 days ago, nothing further heard yet. Public toilet best design is with direct access from outside, the two separate units proposed would meet this criteria. As the car park and present toilet block are still in the ownership of Babergh D C it is possible that the CIL bid will be transferred to Babergh. Mrs Maybury commented that other aspects of design may have to vary in view of Covid recommendations, eg. negative aerosol hand dryers.

Housing & Social

Short report circulated by email by Mrs Twitchett:

The Good Neighbour Scheme continues to support those in the community in need of shopping, prescription collection and more. Now once again with the help of the Babergh Covid grant, we can offer safe transport to hospital and doctors' appointments. We have had 2 requests for trips to the West Suffolk Hospital in this last month, the cost of these has been paid from the grant.

Diane Page the treasurer of the Good Neighbour Scheme, keeps in regular contact by telephone with all those who attend our monthly Teas and Dementia coffee mornings, just to see if they are well and let them know we are thinking of them. All are looking forward to when they can meet again.

Tenter Piece common room – the CIL bid was submitted just in time with only one price but with the commitment to provide two more. Waiting for validation. This is another case where the District Council owns the property so the CIL bid could be transferred, this possibility has been included in the business plan. Because of the CIL regulations the person bidding must have control or ownership. BDC seeking Clarification is also being sought on whether the State Aid maximum would apply.

Correspondence had been received from:

Clare, Countess of Euston, HM Lord-Lieutenant for Suffolk, thanking the Parish Council and the community for their support for each other during these challenging times. She was sure that we could get through this together and that communities will emerge from it stronger.

Email from David Last, Definitive Map Officer, regarding claimed Restrictive Byway at Brent Eleigh/Preston St Mary, a short section of which falls within the parish of Lavenham. Copy of letter of objection received from the resident of Hill House Farm, Preston St Mary. (discussed with Mr Lindsay earlier in the meeting)

Information/newsletters from SALC, CAS and the Collaborative Communities COVID 19 Board had been circulated to all Councillors.

Covid-19 an update

Following the suggestion that Lavenham might be a suitable location to receive government funding in order to assist with introducing measures to enable social distancing when more businesses open in the village, Mr O'Mahony had circulated the proposals for social distancing measures to the Councillors. Due to the urgency to get measures in place before the opening of non-essential shops there had been no opportunity for public consultation but the plans had also been forwarded to the Forum and Headteacher, both of whom were supportive. No objections had been raised by the Councillors. The 20 mph speed limits, for the period of Covid 19 restrictions only, had been agreed with Highways although there could be no enforcement. The trial will be on a 3 week rolling review, then for a further 3 weeks, but this will be flexible. Thanks should go to Kate Parnum at Babergh who is very busy trying to formulate schemes across the district at very short notice.

It was agreed that an initial notice should be posted on the notice boards and through letter boxes in High Street, the area potentially most affected. This information could not be specific at the moment but would bring to attention that measures are being discussed. Cars which are parked either partly, or wholly, on the pavement are a problem as the area available to pedestrians for social distancing is reduced. It is important that notice is given when the implementation date is known so that people feel part of the process.

The community had been very lucky in that several food stores had remained open and were operating under social distancing measures. The post office service has returned on two days a week. Non-essential shops would soon be allowed to open.

Peter Garrett at Babergh is working towards opening the public toilets, although a date

could not be determined yet. Since the government had relaxed the guidance and people were now allowed to travel to exercise there had been problems with people coming to the village for extended periods, not being aware that public toilets are still closed, and using the trees and bushes around the car parks as open air toilets. Clerk to was asked to look into the possibility of hiring portable toilet units as an emergency measure.

Lavenham Heroes

Mrs Morrey had suggested that some people in the village felt that there should be some way of recognising the sterling work carried out by certain individuals and groups in supporting the community during the ongoing health crisis. However, the general feeling among the Councillors was that it would be hard to single out special cases, some people would not want to be picked out, others have put themselves forward as willing to help, such as for the GNS, but have not been called upon. Other people have been quietly helping others in a way which might not be apparent to others. The feeling was that when life returns to normal, or what might become normal, then there will be the opportunity for the Parish Council to arrange or contribute towards an event to celebrate everybody who had helped the community.

Mr Panton mentioned that the FOLA group will be looking at the 2nd weekend in May 2021 to arrange the celebrations postponed from this year, it might be appropriate to build around that.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

Mr Lamont reported that progress was again being made in the painting of lamp posts and finishing the LED lighting scheme, there are 2 lamp posts and two bollard lights left to be installed. Suffolk County Council is now making a real effort to finish. Mr Lamont was thanked for pushing for progress.

Mr Panton said that the digital mapping has been fully brought up to date.

Mr O'Mahony observed that during the last few months there had been a build up of weed growth in the road gutters and pavement road edges. Enquiries would be made as to whether this was the responsibility of the District or County Councils, alternatively a quotation would be sought from the Parish Council's street cleaning contractors for weed killing and removal.

Mr Reeve said that the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan needs looking at seriously and will be an agenda item for July.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd July 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.