

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 7th May 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 Macro.

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

3 members of the public.

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

Co option to the vacancy Rob Macro's details (CV) had been circulated to all Councillors and it was resolved that he should be co opted to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

Police Matters – Go to

https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_april_-_online.pdf for the April 2020 copy of the County newsletter, Constable's County. The newsletter provides an update on policing from the East, West and South policing areas of the County, news of the postponement of the PCC election until 2021, the precept and deployment of additional police officers.

A search for the summary of crimes reported within the parish of Lavenham, which is normally listed on www.police.uk, shows that the 'Your area' service has been temporarily suspended. This is to prioritise providing access to key policing services to support the response to Covid-19.

County Councillor's Report, Mr R Lindsay

Mr Lindsay had circulated his report. Dr Posner has been handling matters in respect of Lavenham Walk during the lockdown and it was suggested that as the County Council is now holding virtual meetings it might be possible to hold a virtual meeting with members to discuss matters relating to Lavenham Walk. Mr Lindsay said he would send a reminder.

In respect of the 20 mph speed limits which are being sought, it was agreed that these are sought village-wide unless SCC has any strong reservations.

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

Mrs Maybury had earlier forwarded her report to the Parish Council and she did not intend to repeat this except to say that the amount available for business grants is now up to £28m. Mrs Maybury had been pleased to help some businesses around Lavenham to apply.

As an update to the fly-tipping in Mud Lane, contractors would be removing this tomorrow. Mr Reeve commented that the District Council had been very good at clearing fly-tipping promptly, the rubble tipped in the Prentice Street car park had gone already.

Mrs Maybury was already supporting Acton Parish Council in trying to get some action to improve the state of the Lavenham Walk (Valley Walk) through their parish. This would strengthen Lavenham's case as well.

Mr Arthey added to Mrs Maybury's report and reported that work on the JLP continues relatively unaffected. This is the stage where responses are being considered, review of the proposed policies and site allocations, and working toward the preparation of the submission document.

Planning applications continue to be dealt with, and the first virtual Planning Committee meeting was held last week. There has inevitably been some prioritisation of applications, but Government advice is that we should continue as close to 'normal' as possible. CIL payments have been deferred for three months.

Business Support Grants - around 70% of funding has been paid out to those eligible. There has been a slow uptake from Village Halls and Sports Clubs.

Waste and recycling - HWRCs are closed and garden waste collections suspended, so the District Council has been alert to the possibility of an increase in fly-tipping. So far there has been no identified increase. An increase of around 5% in both dry recyclable and residual waste collections has been seen. There has also been a reduction in Trade Waste collections with 30% of businesses suspending collections. Both the MRF (dry recyclables) and the EfW (residual) continue to operate as normal. Garden waste collections will resume next week, and hopefully limited re-opening of SCC's HWRCs later this month.

BDC/MSDC staffing - currently staff sickness levels are lower than normal, but SERCO, the waste collection contractor, has 7 of its 79 staff off sick. This is better than earlier in the crisis when some council staff were helping with waste collections.

BDC Cabinet priorities - Cabinet has been receiving weekly updates on the current situation, and is also looking ahead to how they might prioritise what they do as they move into what is being called the 'recovery phase'.

Mr Reeve was concerned about the interim report of the downturn on the Stock Exchange and the possible impact on Council receipts. At the moment the cost is not known and can only be monitored at present.

Dr Posner thought the news of Acton Parish Council's action on the Lavenham Walk was good. He was also glad that the phrase 'recovery phase' was shown in brackets, there is no recovery as yet.

Finally Mrs Maybury reported that both the Village Hall and Pavilion have been put forward for grants to help them through this difficult time.

The Minutes – Prop. by Dr Posner, sec. by Mr Lamont, the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd April 2020 were approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none

Apologies for absence - none

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues - none

Finance and Strategy

Cheques for payment:

idverde Ltd, public toilet works for April £1,800.00: JPB Landscapes, (April grass cutting £928.75, street cleaning £1,253.33, top soil & seed First Meadow £913.10 plus VAT) £3,714.22: Anglian Water, Cemetery water charges £2.92: Seago & Stopps Payroll Solutions, payroll services q/e 05/04 £110.40: Kinex, phone account April £37.82: Pear Technology Services, mapping technical support & updates to 31/03/21 £168.00: Sudbury Town Council, Warden Services, quarter to 31/03/20 £666.06: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Payroll £1,237.71: Suffolk Tree Services, First Meadow tree works £2,676.00: Suffolk Tree Services, Cemetery boundary Lime trees £960.00: British Gas, electricity supply to Church Street toilets £17.88: Mutts Butts, dog bag dispenser refill bags £157.25: Lavenham Community Land Trust, financial support to part acquire affordable element of open market properties (see March minutes, ref. 03(i)/20 p.12) £17,500.00: The Lavenham Press, digital printing COVID-19 information leaflets 3 & 4 £288.00.

Direct Debit on 28th April, Total Gas & Power, electricity supply to Prentice Street toilets £74.15.

Remittance Advice from Babergh District Council: dated 3 April payment of £2,241.00 Cleansing Grant; dated 14 April payment of £16,229.76 CIL and £40,000 50% of Precept 2020/21.

A letter to the Bank requests the transfer of £12,000.00 between accounts.

It was agreed that the cheque for idverde would be held until it was clear whether or not they are receiving Government assistance to continue operating.

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

Finance update – this had been circulated to all Councillors and included a reconciliation of the bank balances as at 31st March 2020. It was proposed by Mrs Norman, seconded by Mr Lamont, that this summary is accepted. Carried.

Mr Reeve said that a virtual meeting of the Finance Working Group would be arranged shortly, and invited suggestions of how the balances are treated in the future.

Mr Lamont reported that the likely final costs of the LED replacement project would be £137,000.00. This is being closely monitored. There are now only four more LEDs to be fitted.

JPB Landscapes had applied topsoil, rolled and re-seeded the damaged areas on the First Meadow, unfortunately the weather had been very dry for the following weeks and it was unclear whether the seed was growing. The situation will be monitored. It was noted that when Suffolk Tree Services had driven onto the meadow to carry out tree surgery they had been very conscientious and re-raked the entrance area when they left.

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/20/01386 Windwards Bury Road Lavenham

Householder Application - Erection of single storey side extension and first floor rear balcony. Completes the renovation of the existing building. Recommend Approval

DC/20/01396 Plot 2 Windwards Bury Road Lavenham

Application for removal 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.

Change to the area of the kitchen. Recommend Approval

DC/20/01371 Drury House Frogs hall Road Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Erection of 3No. dwellings with basements and private gardens including alteration to vehicular access (following demolition of existing house and outbuildings)

The Planning Working Group had taken into consideration Policy H1, CS11 checklist, Policy D1 Design and Character, connection to village, Policy D3 replacement dwellings and lack of heritage assets or important spaces. Recommend Approval.

DC/20/01670 Old Gas Works Water Street Lavenham

Application for Works on Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 Sycamore - Remove four stems from near base and raise crown.

No issues. Recommend Approval.

It was proposed by Mr Panton, seconded by Mr Grindley, that the recommendations made by the Planning Working Group and circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting, be confirmed by the Council. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/20/00603 Copingers, 66 Water Street, Lavenham - Listed Building Consent granted for external lime render repairs to North Elevation & brick/mortar repairs to internal fireplaces.

DC/20/01149 Street Record, Deacons Close, Lavenham – Notification of Works to Tree(s) in a Conservation Area, T1 Cedar, reduce by 2 metres and raise the crown to 4.5 metres

DC/20/00872 & DC/20/00895 37 Prentice Street, Lavenham – Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for erection of two storey rear extension

DC/20/00976 17 Bolton Street, Lavenham – Refusal of Listed Building Consent for re-roofing work including associated timber repairs and insulation works

DC/20/00295 4 Ropers Court, Lavenham – Planning Permission for installation of metal balcony and French doors to first floor rear and replacement of metal railing with balcony to first floor front

DC/20/01123 The Guildhall Of Corpus Christi, Market Place, Lavenham – Listed Building Consent for affix timber handrail to timber banisters

Operations

Former Gas Works Site – Mr O’Mahony said there is little to report, there had been no further meetings. M & M are in the process of arranging access to the site. We cannot go for more estimates until the status of the interceptor tank is known. The picture is very confused and seems to depend on whether the gas holder is redundant or not, the various agencies (National Grid Gas, Cadent and Anglian Water) all seem to have different opinions.

Prentice Street, carpark and toilets – the CIL bid for improvement works must be submitted during May.

Housing & Social

Report circulated by Mrs Twitchett:

The Good Neighbour Scheme has now completed almost 60 known tasks, but many shopping requests are now being carried out by volunteers who were first sent to those needing help at the beginning. Therefore we are not getting the repeat calls for help from all those in need, these volunteers really are being Good Neighbours.

We have had two requests for hospital appointments, one hire vehicle based in Lavenham is big enough to allow social distancing and there is also a Sudbury firm which can be used for appointment requests which can be booked with half a day’s notice. Payment options need to be considered, the Good Neighbours Scheme is in the process of changing bank accounts. The grant available from Babergh has come via the Parish Council so a method of payment through the Parish Council should be put in place.

GNS has been able to help out Lee Morris by providing six volunteers to take turns at being in 2 Lady Street with Annie, should the Post Office re open.

This last week there has been less demand, but as I said at the beginning with continuous help from a paired volunteer it will lessen the need for repeat calls, also when I had a call from Stephnie Osbourne at Babergh, she said they had been quieter there this week. I believe people have got into routines and hopefully we are there for when the emergency comes along.

Correspondence had been received from:

The Local Government Boundary Commission, Suffolk Electoral Review Covid-19 update, due to uncertainty over the Commission’s ability to consult with confidence by July 2020 it is their current expectation that the implementation date of new electoral arrangements for Suffolk County Council will be 2025, not 2021.

Covid-19 an update

Dr Posner has been circulating updates around the Councillors and has put up flags in support of the NHS in the Market Place (with the co-operation of the Guildhall) and at the Bury Road entrance to the village. The Prime Minister's pronouncements on Sunday are awaited.

The Parish Council Covid-19 Newsletter No. 4 has been delivered to all households in the village.

Police are giving special attention to holiday cottages in the village in order to monitor that anyone staying in them is entitled under the present regulations. If a problem is suspected incidents should be reported to the police.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

Mr O'Mahony reminded the meeting of the 75VE information included in the newsletter. Bunting is being put up by individuals and businesses in various areas and he suggested that the village should join in the national toast on doorsteps and in gardens at 3 pm. and perhaps give a round of applause as we do for the NHS.

Mrs Morrey had received favourable feedback from Tatums Teahouse as they had received six calls following the delivery of the newsletter which had contained their takeaway information. Unfortunately the Cock Horse had been too late for their information to be included in that newsletter.

There was a reported increase in the incidences of dog fouling on the First Meadow. Clerk to produce additional notices to remind people to pick up after their dogs.

Mr Lamont confirmed that this meeting has been recorded and a link is available.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 4th June 2020.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.