

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 1st April 2021, commencing 7.30 pm.

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

Present Mr I Lamont, Chairman. Mr J O'Mahony, Vice-Chairman.

Mrs D Twitchett, Mrs M Morrey, Mrs I Mitchell, Mr T Sheppard, Mr M Chick.

Mr R Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor

Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey Babergh District Councillors for Lavenham Ward.

5 members of the public.

Public Forum – the members of the public present were interested in individual agenda items and did not wish to speak.

Firstly the Chairman reported with regret that Mr Panton had tendered his resignation on 9th March, he will be greatly missed. The Casual Vacancy Notice has been posted and we will have to wait until after 9th April to know whether we will be able to co-opt another member.

Also Mr Reeve has tendered his resignation, from 30th March he was no longer a Councillor, although he is welcomed this evening attending remotely.

Mr Lamont said meetings would be strange without him. He had led the community and the Parish Council on many different projects, the Village Hall, Peek Close and now the refurbishment of the public toilets and Tenter Piece common room and had been very supportive to him personally when he took over the role of Chairman from Carroll. His knowledge and experience would be sorely missed.

Carroll said that he hoped to get together with the members of the Council, for a drink perhaps when Covid restrictions allowed, and wished everyone well, both present and previous Parish Councillors.

This vacancy would also be advertised. It was hoped that co-option of new members might be possible at the next meeting on 6th May.

Mr Lindsay added that Lavenham's is a dynamic Parish Council largely due to Carroll driving things forward. In particular he is thinking of the case of the Post Office where Carroll and the Parish Council had things sorted out without him having to do anything.

Police Matters – Go to:

https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_april_-_online.pdf for the April 2021 copy of the County newsletter, Constable's County.

The summary of crimes reported within the parish of Lavenham, listed on www.police.uk, has been updated recently to show crimes reported in February, there had been 6 crimes: Anti-Social Behaviour x 2, Violence & Sexual Offence x 3, Crime Other x 1.

Anti-Social Behaviour in the Prentice Street car park overnight 24/25 March had been reported on Police 101. A response had been received from the Police who had said they would include the area in their patrols. They would also include the car parking area at the Playing Field in Bridge Street Road as an accumulation of litter there seemed to indicate that people were gathering to socialise contrary to current Covid restrictions.

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

By way of clarification regarding the 'Unsuitable for HGVs' sign erected on Sudbury Road to deter lorries from turning left into Bridge Street Road. Several complaints had been received about this, it is too big, too low, blocks the view, not at correct level etc.

Mr Lindsay is investigating ways the situation could be improved as stated in his report.

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

Mrs Maybury recorded her thanks to Carroll Reeve for his inspirational Chairmanship, good humour, vast experience and, at times, the advice he had given her.

Mrs Maybury had emailed Mrs Norman regarding Quiet Lanes and suggested that adjoining villages, such as Acton and Great Waldingfield, could help if contacted.

Mention was made of the allocation of a two bedroom affordable house in Lavenham to somebody from outside the village. Mrs Maybury urged people to apply for houses as they become available.

Mrs Maybury was amazed at the vast increase in littering during the Covid restriction period. She also understood that use of public rights of way is up 75% over the last year.

Mrs Twitchett raised the matter of parking problems in Tenter Piece which the start of work to the common room would exacerbate. It is understood that the District Council considers that it is too expensive to do anything to improve the situation.

Mr Arthey added his thanks to those already expressed to Mr Reeve.

There will be a report produced jointly by Mr Arthey and Mrs Maybury for the Annual Parish Meeting. Mr Arthey said that he would be unable to join the May meeting as he will be chairing a meeting on the night.

The District Council is chasing CIL payment in respect of the development off Bears Lane. Payment of CIL on time is most important as plans and projects are in place and this money is needed to help pay for these.

The Minutes

It was prop. by Mrs Twitchett, sec. by Mr Chick, that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2021 are approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none.

Apologies for absence -Mrs Norman and Mr Macro.

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues

Mr Mawford has agreed to chair the organising committee to get things off the ground and on a firm footing, on the understanding that any profits arising will be dedicated to education support in Lavenham, but will not be able to lead on the organising of the event itself. The organising committee is now much depleted following a number of resignations and will need at least 6-8 new members because of the amount of work involved in putting on an event where as many roles as possible will have to be undertaken by volunteers in order to keep costs down.

In a normal year arrangements for the event would be more advanced by at least six weeks. There was discussion about holding a slimmed down event for 2021 and whether the potential for a return of the pandemic is too much of a threat to consider staging any event at all. Insurers have indicated that cancellation due to Corona Virus or similar would not be covered so any deposits paid would be lost.

The possibility of staging a fair would be kept on the table while investigations continue.

It was agreed that, whether or not a Christmas event took place, the Parish Council will support the Christmas lighting scheme, prop. Mr O'Mahony, sec. Mrs Morrey.

Casual Vacancies, timetable and possible co-option

It was mentioned earlier in the meeting that hopefully the Parish Council will be able to co-opt to fill the vacancies at the May meeting. The Parish Council would welcome members

of the community coming forward to express an interest in becoming a member of the Council. If they had any particular skills or life experience which they felt would be an advantage to the work of the Council so much the better.

Lavenham Neighbourhood Development Plan revision update

Summary of Mrs Morrey's report to the Council:

We said farewell to Bryan Panton as our Chair and thank him for setting up this Group, leading it through its teething stages, educating us all in such arcane terms as Affordable Housing and Landscape Character Assessment and setting up our links with CAS for the software to produce the Questionnaires.

Roy Mawford was welcomed as our new Chair and we are extremely grateful to him. Various members of the Group have done sterling work, setting up the website and working with Roy towards producing the Community Questionnaire which will be available for completion both online and by hardcopy using a unique number system. The questionnaire is expected to be ready for distribution in late May.

An extremely professional first edition of the Newsletter was produced and distributed, work is progressing on the second Newsletter and poster and fliers for distribution later in April.

Time lines, milestones and deadlines are tracked on a Gantt Chart and the Landscape Character Assessment is being updated in accordance with modern guidelines.

Operations

Project Updates

Prentice Street car park and toilets – further finance to provide an access ramp, necessitated by the moving of the site of the toilets, had been agreed with Babergh.

Work completed subject to: installation of toilet block w/c 5th April (previously 15th March); installation of electric charging points. The Grid connection presently provides insufficient power for this function, therefore a new heavier duty supply cable will need to be laid by UKPN at an additional cost of approximately £19,502. At the suggestion of Cllr Arthey a separate CIL bid has been made. In addition, the power for the use of the previous toilet block has now been condemned and a new connection will be necessary and can only be installed once the previously mentioned supply is installed.

A request for a payment on account of our CIL bid has been made.

Church Street toilets – CIL bid was agreed at BDC Cabinet on 8th March. Builders lined up to commence on 19th April. Building regulations and planning permissions are in place.

Tenter Piece – CIL bid for this agreed. The same builders will carry out this work as Church Street toilets, revised start date is w/c 19th April. Again, building regulations and planning are in place.

Harwood Place and Green Willows – no further progress. Business case could now be progressed for at least Harwood Place.

Gas Works site – Summary of Mr O'Mahony's report to the Council:

We are still waiting for the final consent of the Sanctioning Committee of National Grid for the transfer of ownership to us. They are due to meet on 14th April and consider the proposal and what level of refurbishment will take place to the gas holder. In the meantime I have been intent on holding back on some actions that will result in significant expenditure just in case the Committee causes further delay or even cancellation, unlikely but possible. It is a bit of a balancing act as we want to get moving as soon as we get the go ahead.

On the advice of MLM the design brief has been updated. This means that we have to go back to the three contractors who submitted bids for the earlier schedule of works and give them the opportunity to re-bid. At the same time we will invite two further companies who have a track record of dealing with such sites to also submit competitive tenders.

I have made application to UKPN for power to be connected to the site but firstly they have to research what level of power is available. At that stage we will have to decide on the Electric Vehicle charging capacity.

Unless there are any significant developments this will be the substance of a report to LPC on 1st April 2021.

This is a sample of what came out of the recent site visit to the former gas works. We would not be where we are today without the efforts of Andrew Butcher, who is a retired Quantity Surveyor and has experience of working on much larger gas works sites than this.

Our solicitors are looking at the draft Heads of Agreement, especially in respect of the suggested overage.

Water Street meeting – Mr O’Mahony has met with the engineer from Highways but is awaiting a site visit in respect of the design.

LED lighting – the replacement column light has been installed on the corner of Water Street and Barn Street.

New Projects

Car Parking, leasing and cashless donation boxes – a quote for the posts has been received although as reported there is a delay in the power supply. It was thought the posts could be installed for cash payments in the interim.

On-pavement parking control, planters/street furniture – in respect of the Market Place, a consultation paper has been produced by Mrs Mitchell, this will be issued as a newsletter with public consultation/exhibition events to be held in May, at least one being in the Market Place.

Allotments – a written FOI request for information and requirement for the Parish Council to act under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 had been received from the Lavenham Allotments Group. This asked for advice on what is being done by the Parish Council to discharge their responsibility to provide allotments to residents, and any action planned to discharge this responsibility, going forward. Also written details of land currently owned by the Parish Council, address, area and current use, with a considered written assessment of the suitability of each plot to be turned over to allotments.

Clerk is in the process of collating information regarding land in ownership of the Parish Council.

Enquiries would also be made into the plans for development of land off Norman Way as these had included an area of land for allotments to replace those lost within the plans which had previously been let by Mr Kemp. The timescale of the development and the way in which the allotment area might be managed in the future are unknown at present

Finance and Strategy

Cheques for payment:

idverde Ltd., public toilets works for March (Church Street only) £930.00: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Kinex, phone account March £43.09: Payroll £747.28: Mutts Butts, dog bag refills £157.25: NALC, online planning conference, 28/07/21 T Sheppard £38.93: MLM Group, professional services Old Gas Works site £6,660.00: Pear Technology Services, Mapp Pro technical support & updates £168.00: Modicum Planning, LNDP review support £425.00: British Gas, electricity supply to Church St toilets £14.76: Karzees, hire of 2 x temporary toilet units Prentice Street, 26/03 to 31/03 plus delivery £72.00: JPB Landscapes, (March grasscutting/maintenance £928.75, street cleaning £1,253.33) + VAT £2,618.50: Suffolk Association of Local Councils, membership fee 2021/22 £659.04.

Note: The invoice for SCC annual energy & maintenance for £4,339.65 listed in the minutes for 4th March was based on an indication of costs, final calculation received resulted in a cost reduced to £4,318.05 and the cheque paid was reduced accordingly.

Remittance Advices from Babergh D C, payment by BACS of £2,380.56 Cleansing Grant for Q4 20/21, £920.00 refund cost of temporary toilets due to delayed opening of toilets June/July 2020. Also confirmation from Babergh District Council that due to Small Business Rate Relief there are no Business Rates due for 2021/22 in respect of Cemetery and Premises. Confirmation of Mandate Change Request from Barclays Bank, Mrs Morrey and Mr Macro added.

A letter to the Bank requests the transfer of £15,000.00 between accounts.

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

Consider donation to Friends of Lavenham Library – Mr Colin Rockall, Chairman of the Friends, had written asking if the Parish Council would consider a donation to support increased sessions for the pre school and primary school which, because of limited space, would have to be held outside normal library opening hours with increased staff costs. It was prop. by Mrs Twitchett, sec. by Mrs Mitchell, that a donation of £250 be made from budget as this was a scheme which would encourage the library's work with young people. Carried.

Finance Update – a summary of the income and expenditure to year ending 31st March 2021 was being drafted and would be completed when updated from the bank statement.

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/20/05374 Land Adjacent To Tudor Cottage, The Common, Lavenham

Outline planning application (all matters reserved) - Erection of 1 No self-build dwelling.

It was felt that the existing Parish Council recommendation should stand.

Prop. Mr O'Mahony, sec. Mrs Twitchett, recommend refusal. Carried.

DC/21/00961 Second Meadow Stables Brent Eleigh Road Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Erection of 1 No dwelling (following removal of existing temporary mobile home)

The justification given by the livery owners to support a more permanent structure, ie. that they have to visit more often, does not in itself support the proposal. The proposed site of the building is shown within Flood Risk Zone 1 (Low Risk), Second Meadow floods most years (witness this winter) and climate change may increase the vulnerability to flooding. The application shows no significant material changes, change of size and small change in location of the previous building, to justify changing the previous decision by the District Council to refuse the previous application and their position that a permanent dwelling should not be built on this site.

Prop. Mrs Twitchett, sec. Mrs Mitchell, recommend refusal. Carried.

The following applications and Planning Working Group recommendations were considered en bloc:

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

DC/21/01246 Land At Slough Farm, Bridge Street, Lavenham

Application for Permission in Principle Town and Country Planning Act 1990. (Amendment) Order 2017 - Conversion of Industrial Units (B1/B2) for the Residential Development of 3 No dwellings.

The majority of former farm buildings at this site have been, or are in the process of being, converted. This application, in principle, would complete the conversions. No issues.

Recommend approval.

DC/21/01136 First Floor, 6 Market Place, Lavenham

Full Planning Permission - Change of Use of first floor from (C3) to extend tea room to both

floors.

Covid restrictions have reduced the existing capacity, using the upstairs room, including toilet facility, will restore capacity with no detriment to the listed structure Recommend approval.

DC/21/01274 & DC/21/01275 16 Bolton Street, Lavenham

Householder Application & Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of single storey rear extension (Alternative scheme to B/13/01308 & B/13/01309 not implemented)

Previous applications approved but not implemented. Current application replicates the previous with minor changes. No reason to change PC position. Recommend Approval

DC/21/01305 5 Osier View, Lavenham

Householder Application - Erection of two-storey rear extension and change window to front elevation.

The extension will not be overlooked from other properties and will not be out of scale with the site. Recommend Approval.

DC/21/01517 7-8 Church Street, Lavenham

Listed Building Consent - Removal of external render from gable end and replace with lime render on laths. To include associated repairs to timber frame and insertion of sheep wool insulation. Apply dubbing out coat if required and lime topcoat. Repainting of whole exterior with lime wash. Essential repairs. Recommend Approval

DC/21/01566 The Grove, 5 Lady Street, Lavenham

Application for works to a tree in a Conservation Area - (T1)- Lime tree - reduce by approximately 3m in height, to face back 1.5-2m overhanging the road and adjacent property, to manage its size and reduce the overhang. No Issues. Recommend Approval

DC/21/01505 & DC/21/01522 Hill Cottage, 7 Prentice Street, Lavenham

Householder Application & Listed Building Consent - Construction of landing, railing and steps to principle/front entrance (Following Demolition of existing steps/railing)

Existing steps have narrow tread and single railing on uphill side facing directly onto the footpath. The steps will be rebuilt side on to the footpath with the same footprint as the existing and an outside railing similar to other steps in Prentice Street. Recommend approval.

DC/21/01701 20 High Street, Lavenham

Application for Listed Building Consent - Re-plaster rear elevation

Unsympathetic coverings and repairs in the past have led to the Oak ledges rotting and significant failure of the lime plaster rendering and supporting framework. Recommend approval.

DC/21/01782 & DC/21/01783 8 Shilling Street, Lavenham

Householder application & Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of single storey rear extension and repairs to front elevation. New outbuilding to rear of garden.

No impact on the street scene, outbuilding to the rear of the garden has no visual impact on the setting of the listed building The replacement of the existing rear extension has no impact on the listed features of the property. Recommend approval.

It was proposed by Mrs Mitchell, seconded by Mrs Twitchett, that the recommendations made by the Planning Group be endorsed. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/21/00675 The Priory, Water Street, Lavenham – no objections to Notification for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1no Walnut(T2) to allow other tree to grow, 1No Cherry(T4) due to dieback and overcrowding and 1No Yew (T3) overhanging neighbouring property and potential damage

DC/21/00925 Swan Hotel, High Street, Lavenham – no objections to works to Trees in a Conservation Area - 1no Cypress - Crown lift by 4 metres, Cut back low branches and Remove large right hand stem

DC/21/00426 6 Lady Street, Lavenham – planning permission granted for erection of single storey outbuilding

DISCHARGE OF CONDITION(S) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

DC/17/03100 Land South Of Howlett Of Lavenham, Melford Road, Lavenham - Condition 7 Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) Discharged

DC/21/00588 Drury House, Frogs Hall Road, Lavenham - Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act relating to DC/20/01371 for variation of Condition 2 (Approved plans and documents) granted

Housing & Social

Good Neighbours Scheme – the last month had been very quiet, only two appointments, and Mrs Twitchett had not produced a report.

Need to find somewhere to store the furniture from the Tenter Piece common room while building works were being carried out.

Mrs Morrey is working to secure a lease from Babergh District Council.

Covid Vaccination Programme update - Mrs Mitchell had circulated an update on the Covid 19 Vaccination Programme. Bildeston Health Centre is now solely concentrating on delivering 2nd vaccines, the large clinics at Bildeston had been a great success. The Long Melford Practice reports that all Care Home residents and carers in Cohort 1 have received 2nd jabs. Second dose clinics commenced 30th March for Cohorts 2-3. Volunteers have continued their support at both locations ensuring the smooth and safe running of the clinics.

Following difficulties with the telephone system the Long Melford Practice has an upgrade of the telephone system in hand. The Practice has commenced planning their roadmap to restoring a full Primary Care Service from both Lavenham and Long Melford Surgeries.

The Practice Manager has agreed to relay the Parish Council's thoughts in regard to registering the Lavenham surgery as an Asset of Community Value to the Partners. An assessment of community opinion about this will be made via the Neighbourhood Plan review questionnaire.

Correspondence had been received from:

BAPTC, Babergh Alliance of Parish & Town Councils, Spring Newsletter circulated to Councillors

Keep Britain Tidy, launching the Great British Spring Clean Campaign, which will run from 28th May to 13th June.

Mrs Maybury forwarding the online information for the new customer access point in the Sudbury Library

The Lavenham Gardening Club committee asking if the Parish Council is happy for them to go ahead and hold 2 plant sales in the Market Place, subject to prevailing Government Covid restrictions. The proposed dates are Saturday 8th May and 29th May, both from 9.30 am to 2 pm., with some time before and after to set up and then dismantle the tables. No objections were raised so long as current Covid guidelines are followed.

Babergh & Mid Suffolk DCs, dated 31 March, informing the Parish Council that Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have today submitted the Joint Local Plan for independent examination by the Secretary of State.

Address Management, Babergh District Council, putting forward the street names suggested by the developers for 'land to the north west and south west of Norman Way'. The Council thought that Parmenter Walk and The Paddocks appropriately reflected former use of the site and did not want to suggest any alternatives.

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

It was agreed that it would be appropriate to display the Neighbourhood Plan review

posters on the parish notice boards.

It was reported that the Farmers' Market will be operating from the Church meadow behind the Village Hall for 12 occasions from May.

Mr Sheppard had sat in on the last two meetings of BAPTC (Babergh Alliance of Parish & Town Councils), Mrs Mitchell will apply to join the group.

The Annual Parish Meeting must be held before 1st June 2021. Enquiries to be made as to available dates at the Village Hall, although it was possible that certain restrictions as to numbers might still be in place. The last Thursday in May was suggested. Enquiries would also be made about the availability of a meeting room for the regular monthly meetings once the ability to hold remote meetings ends on 7th May.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 6th May 2021.

The meeting closed at 10 pm.