

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 7.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllr C Morgan (Chair), Cllrs S Felgate, P King, T Taylor and S Whitelaw. District Cllr L Parker, D Hattrell (Clerk) and 4 members of the public attended in person. No video link was requested.

PUBLIC FORUM: A resident raised again the state of the roads and weeds and was thanked for his proactive reporting between meetings. Although this is a County Council – Highways – matter, District Cllr L Parker agreed to support the resident by requesting further action.

APOLOGIES: were received and accepted from Cllr J Evans (Vice Chair). County Cllr J Finch had also sent his apologies.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2nd JULY 2025: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: We have just received confirmation that the relocation of the dog bin from Harrow Street to Plough Lane can go ahead as a serviceable location. Cllr S Whitelaw agreed to take this forward – **Action Cllr Whitelaw.**

UPDATES FROM COMMUNITY, ORGANISATIONS AND WARDENS ON URGENT MATTERS:

Reports were provided for the Village Hall, Footpaths, Village Trees, Village Green, Community Woodland and from the Police Website.

Village Hall Report

The report gave details of the new improved access to the main front doors – this project has been almost a year in the making. They are grateful to both Babergh District Council (BDC) Community Grant and RM Sargeant Landscaping & Fencing Ltd, without whom they could not have completed this project. Leavenheath Village Hall (LVH) now has its own Facebook page! They are using this regularly to keep followers up to date with their latest news. If you are on Facebook, please like &/or follow. For those who aren't online, they still use the village hall foyer & noticeboards around the village to advertise news & events. They would like to thank everyone who came to the LVH Quiz Night on 13th September; it was a fantastic night!

Their next event is the Christmas Fayre on Sunday 30th November 12-3pm. They have a great range of stalls and light refreshments in aid of LVH. If you live in or near Leavenheath & would be willing to help LVH advertise the Christmas Fayre by having an advertising board for your garden, they would love to hear from you. Please email at: villagehallatleavenheath@gmail.com or call John Garrett on 07740 099760. This will be a great event for all and will also help raise much needed funds for LVH!

Tree Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Footpath Warden's Report

Cllr S Felgate reported that the encroachment of the path at Orchard Walk can now be followed up as bird nesting season has finished – **Action Cllr S Felgate.**

Police Report -

May

No crimes reported

June

1 x Violence and Sexual offence - Near SBN Golf Club - Unable to prosecute suspect

1 x Other theft - On or near Plough Lane - Investigation complete, no suspect identified

1 x Violence and Sexual offence - On or near Hawthorn Way - Under investigation

July

1 x Violence and Sexual offence - On or near The Old Road - Unable to prosecute suspect

Village Green Report

The Village Green bollard and path to the playground is in hand. This was delegated between meetings, and the work was authorised and bollard ordered. P Mortlock had reported progress with the Village Green benches which had been cleaned and repaired. A new memorial bench has been installed near the entrance to Village Green. A report was made in LSPN.

The Play Area residual monies and inspection and maintenance going forward were discussed. The Meeting was closed briefly to allow G Deeks to outline some residual work. These included benches that he can provide free of charge, a litter bin, sign/warning boards. In the meantime, the residual monies have been calculated - £17092.18- and some ear-marked pending a review by the Finance Working Group.

Cllr P King agreed to join the Finance Working Group which includes Cllrs Evans, Whitelaw and the Responsible Finance Officer/Clerk.

It was agreed to closely monitor the Net in respect of any issues with wildlife, which fortunately none has been observed to date. The temporary signage urging consideration of neighbouring residents by keeping the noise down has been taken. Consideration regarding more permanent signage will be made. What 3 words will be required for a future litter bin to check a serviceable location is proposed for emptying. The Playground has always been inspected independently for safety on an annual basis, and this will continue. The Clerk agreed to check the liability insurance arrangements in relation to the frequency of inspections by the Village Green Charity to ensure that any conditions are complied with – **Action Clerk.**

The noticeboard on the Village Green by the High Road has been repaired temporarily and it was agreed for Cllr S Felgate to liaise with the new contractor and seek a quote for permanent repairs – **Action S Felgate**. The Clerk will circulate the quote upon receipt as this has been delegated between meetings.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker attended and reported on a busy period, and he pledged to re-engage over the matters important to the Parish. The Local Government Re-organisation is moving at a rapid pace. We have 6 Councils currently and the new unitary arrangements proposed are for only 1 (proposed by the County Council) or 3 (proposed by the District Councils). Cllr Parker spoke of the duplication and the need for reform. A period of consultation will follow. He urged residents and Town and Parish Councils to engage. Now charging in car parks is in place a report is due on how the new arrangements are going. The Vehicle Activated Signage and posts have been received and we now need to find a contractor to put the posts in place at the locations agreed by County Highways. The Clerk will attempt to contact the Community Wardens in the first instance and other local contractors may also be approached – **Action Clerk**. Thereafter, a contract will be needed to move the signage between the two poles.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch had sent his apologies and his report received in advance covered: -

A new single Council is proposed by Suffolk County Council (SCC). Historical registers and records have been digitalised by The Hold in Ipswich. A guide has been produced to Infrastructure Contributions in Suffolk for developers which is available on the SCC website. Changes resulting from community suggestions have been made to bus services in Suffolk. SCC still opposes Norwich to Tilbury pylons. Virtual Fostering and Adoption sessions continue.

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: The A134 hedge tree quote of £300 had been circulated some weeks ahead of the meeting and there was consensus that this be approved. This was resolved and it was agreed for Cllr S Whitelaw to take this forward with the contractor – **Action S Whitelaw**. Volunteers will be needed for safe working practices whilst the work is being undertaken close to the A134. Once the hedge trees have been removed, the need for further work can be reviewed. This may require a mini digger.

LEAVENHEATH EVENTS: Leavenheath Events would like to fund a new defibrillator cabinet from the Bingo Event being arranged. In view of the gambling legislation, the proceeds need to go to a charitable cause. If there is a shortfall in relation to the cabinet cost, then this is proposed to come out of previous surplus from Leavenheath Events. This was resolved. The forthcoming Bingo Event budget was circulated between meetings and follows a tried and tested format. There was consensus that this be approved. Approval of the budget was formally resolved. The Santas Sleigh was being arranged with help from the Scouts, Fun & Games Night for February 2026 and a further Fete on 4th July 2026.

It was agreed for a public interest confidential matter to be discussed following the Meeting, a report had been issued to Councillors ahead of the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: On-going correspondence was noted by the meeting.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as of 27th August 2025 were £15384.53 in the Community Account and £30000.00 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £45,384.53.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>At 1st August</u>			
Funds Transfer	1231.81	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	338.40	SALC	Internal Audit Fee
Funds Transfer	50.00	E. Anglian Air Ambulance	LE - Fete 25
Funds Transfer	30.00	Leavenheath VH	LE - Fete 25
Funds Transfer	972.00	Moser Groundcare	V Green Maintenance
Funds Transfer	594.00	Leavenheath VH	BDC Grant for VH
<u>At 1st September</u>			
Funds Transfer	1110.95	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	648.00	Moser Groundcare	VG Maintenance
Funds Transfer	1195.20	Babergh DC	Bin Empty Charges
Funds Transfer	55.98	Z Day	LE - Nov Bingo 25
Funds Transfer	51.66	G Deeks	LE - Nov Bingo 25
Funds Transfer	48.00	MJO Publications	LE - Fete 25

The payment to Z. Day should have been £55.93, however, due to a bank error 5p more was paid. The bank has reimbursed this amount. Due to a bank error, a new card etc. was needed by the Clerk, they have paid compensation for the inconvenience of £150.05 including the 5p error above.

Review of Asset Register

The Asset Register was reviewed and will be updated with purchases during this financial year by 31st March 2026. Cllr S Whitelaw is reviewing the Assets Listed.

Review of Risk Management Policy

The document was circulated ahead of the Meeting. Cllr S Whitelaw is taking the lead regarding the Risk Assessment Inspections. It was resolved that this Policy continues to meet our needs.

Internal Audit Report

The full report was circulated upon receipt and uploaded to the website. It was noted that all matters were approved with some future recommendations around transparency. As our Income and Expenditure exceeds £25,000, this legislation is best practice rather than a requirement for us currently. More detailed reporting in the minutes of budget was recommended - **Action Clerk**. Additionally, more information from Transparency Legislation to be made available. The Clerk has added an additional page to our website. All agreed the website addition is helpful and provides good access to all the required information. Cllr S Whitelaw asked about the new Model Standing Orders. During the summer the Clerk worked on the new model tailoring it to our needs. It was agreed to forward this to Cllr Whitelaw - **Action Clerk**.

Review of Effectiveness of Internal Auditors and appointment of Auditors.

It was noted that the Internal Audit provided by SALC is comprehensive and it was resolved to continue to appoint SALC as Internal Auditors.

External Audit Report

Since the Agenda, the External Audit has been concluded with no matters of concern. The report and concluding document are now on our website. The Chair took the opportunity to thank the Clerk/RFO for all her work towards audit.

Any Other Urgent financial matters

Cllr S Felgate agreed to put a notice in LSPN seeking ideas on financial priorities for the Parish Council which can be considered when we are setting next year's budget – **Action Cllr Felgate – deadline 19th October.**

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: Tree cutting and pavement clearance is on-going, and Cllr Felgate is pressing for better bus stop provision on the A134. It was noted some positive changes have taken place regarding the bus service.

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: A quote has been agreed to repair the Village Green noticeboard near the High Road.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS: Nothing was raised.

The meeting closed at **8.34 p.m.**

The next PC Meeting is scheduled for **5th November 2025.**

Planning Meeting on 17th September 2025

The following Planning Applications were discussed: -

- A) Change of Use from Community Shop to Class E at Hare and Hounds, Harrow Street – DC/25/03411.**

There were **No Objections** between Meetings.

- B) Traffic control measures for Bramford to Twinstead works. Although this is for information, we are permitted to submit comments – It was agreed not to submit any further comments at this time.**

- C) Works to protected tree at 19 Elm Tree Lane – DC/25/03858.**

The PC had **No Objections.**

- D) Any other urgent Planning Matters including any progress towards updating the Neighbourhood Plan. There are no updates currently.**