

MINUTES of the 67th ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AT LEAVENHEATH on 28th May 2019 held at The Village Hall, Leavenheath.

PRESENT: Around 45 people were present including Councillors and Clerk. Barbara Rowe opened the meeting as the Chairman for the past year by welcoming everyone to the 67th Annual Parish Meeting in Leavenheath. She then introduced the speakers.

APOLOGIES: Cllr C Morgan, County Cllr J Finch and Ben Sadler.

MINUTES OF 29th May 2018: Were accepted as a true record.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: The new District Cllr Lee Parker introduced himself and explained his local area knowledge, experience on the District Council and his focus on Planning issues. He confirmed the District Council has moved from a majority administration to one with no overall control. He is hopeful of a good collaborative approach. The out-going District Cllr Jennie Jenkins delivered a report focusing on the finances including the loss of the Revenue Support Grant and the substantial borrowing that is now necessary. There were no questions. Jennie was thanked for all her support to the Parish over the years and Lee was welcomed.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch was unable to attend, however, the Clerk read from his report which covered the following areas: -
The County Council is looking to develop a 4.5 acre site which is owned as part of its County Farm estate in Cockfield village near Lavenham. The plan was for 51 affordable homes to be built. Suffolk's tourism trade was booming. Superfast broadband continues to be rolled out. Mid Suffolk Home First have been rated outstanding by the Care Quality Commission. Mid Suffolk Home First support people following a period of ill health with the aim to help them restore some independence. A national award was received for supporting communities to be more energy efficient. Construction of a new building called "The Hold" was underway for Suffolk's archival collections. His report covered the significance of the sport and physical activity sector to the Suffolk economy. Thermal patching technology was introduced to repair Suffolk roads. His report confirmed Suffolk has risen in the national GCSE league tables. More specialist education placements in Suffolk have been agreed. Suffolk had won a grant to develop sensors for street lights to monitor all manner of things in the vicinity of the light such as road temperatures, traffic speeds and to equip them with renewable energy. Finally he focused on the budget setting including the costs of providing Adult and Community Services. His report concluded by thanking everyone for their support and the Parish Council.

CHAIRMANS REPORT: Barbara Rowe delivered her report as the Chairman for the majority of the year leading to the Annual Parish Meeting. She thanked the retiring Parish Councillors. She spoke of the opposition to the Koning's application and, despite this, that it was approved. Sadly we had insufficient volunteers to proceed with Community Speed Watch. She concluded by referring to the information meeting for residents on Neighbourhood Planning and Housing Needs. The new Chairman, Paul Mortlock, then took the Chair. He introduced himself and spoke of his involvement with various village matters. He stressed that further Parish Councillors were needed as were further Committee Members for Village Organisations.

FINANCE REPORT: The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer delivered a report on the Parish Council Finances. The Precept had decreased slightly to £19461. Some Community Infrastructure Levy amounts totaling just over £4000 had been received and were to be allocated. Bank Interest remains low. A few years ago, Locality budget of £3000 was paid as a contribution towards making the crossing point for the A134 near Plough Lane more visible to motorists. We were still holding this amount together with Parish Council Reserves until the crossing was completed to the satisfaction of the Parish Council. No Invoice from the County Council had been received. The outstanding amount was around £6000. A further improvement at the crossing of a bright yellow background to the warning signs had since been agreed and a land owner was arranging to cut back the gorse to make the signage more visible. Expenditure came within budget. There was investment last year in village assets including new noticeboards, bins and benches. The Parish Council had a sum of £19000 in reserves for future renewal of village assets and the new Council was to do some work investigating and allocating that amount to the various village assets. The Parish Council had a healthy end of year balance of around £47000. This included outstanding billing (expenditure) of around £8250, the reserves for future renewal of Village Assets at £19000 and around £4000 CIL monies which was to be allocated.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY: Cllr Dean Kingham spoke of the Village Meeting on the subject of Neighbourhood Planning and Housing Needs Survey held in February and the steps taken since. Following a favourable reaction at and since the meeting, the Parish Council designated the Parish Boundary as the first step. Volunteers had come forward to get involved and form a Committee and a Meeting was being arranged to get things started.

REPORTS FROM VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS: Reports were given from the Village Hall, Village Green and Community Woodland. All Committee members were thanked for all their hard work. Various items were being renewed on the Village Green. Cracked window glass was replaced in the Committee Room of the Village Hall. The Digital Cinema continues to do well and Cllr S Whitelaw has taken over as Treasurer for the Village Hall. The Community Woodlands at Royston Wood and Rowley Wood are very much enjoyed and the recent dawn chorus walk went well.

ELECTOR'S QUESTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS: No questions were raised.

The meeting closed at **8.12 pm.**