

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 18th January 2023 at 7.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall and by Video Conferencing.

PRESENT: P Mortlock (Chairman), C Morgan, R Bellenie, D Kingham, Y Roder, S Whitelaw, D Hattrell (Clerk), L Parker (District Cllr) and 1 member of the public attended in person and 2 members of the public attended by Video Link.

The Chairman led a minute of silence to reflect on the sad loss of Cllr Richard Cowell. His funeral details had been announced and some were hoping to attend.

PUBLIC FORUM: A resident attending by video link asked D Kingham to clarify what was meant at last meeting by saying the recommendations for the Neighbourhood Plan could be unlawful. D Kingham explained that there is a duty to give reasons/explanation and if not provided, under public law the overall recommendations could be deemed unlawful. However, he confirmed there would be an update later in the meeting. He was then asked where Minutes of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group could be viewed. He confirmed on their website. The member of the public attending in person confirmed that she has seen soil samples being taken from the field and reminded District Cllr Lee Parker of her related letter regarding protection of wildlife corridors. This was noted.

APOLOGIES: were received from T Smith and J Finch (County Cllr)

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 7TH DECEMBER 2022: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: The Chairman raised the matter of a bin for the litter pickers. L Parker had confirmed the District Council is happy to provide one ideally at a Community site such as the Village Hall. The suggestion of the pub may indicate a commercial element. The Chairman explained to L Parker that the majority of litter is collected from near the A134 and the pub is a closer site to the A134. The Chairman asked if a lockable one would satisfy the District Council's concerns. L Parker agreed to enquire again. On another matter, the Warm Space scheme had started in the main hall at the Village Hall. The Chairman noted he still needed to review the condition of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust footpath reported at previous meetings.

UPDATES FROM COMMUNITY, ORGANISATIONS AND WARDENS ON URGENT MATTERS DURING THE RESTRICTIONS BY COVID 19:

Reports were provided from the Village Hall, Footpath Warden, Tree Warden, Village Green, Community Woodland and from the Police Website.

Village Hall Report

The Committee welcomed back to their hirers after the Christmas/New Year holidays. A few groups had to cancel due to the A134 being closed overnight for essential repairs but this work is now complete so it was business as usual. Regular maintenance/safety checks and repairs have been carried out. The Committee thanked their Film Night organisers for their continued effort to keep this going in the village. February is Mrs Harris goes to Paris, March will be The Road Dance so tickets can be booked in the usual way. A Community Warm Space has been organised in the Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month 12.30-4pm so all are welcome to drop in.

Tree Warden's Report

T Smith, the Tree Warden, is now in possession of approximately 300 trees and 200 hedgerow plants from the Woodland Trust via the Suffolk Tree Warden Network for use around the village for both businesses and residents alike. He also received two black poplar saplings (male clone no. 23, female clone no. 47). With only 600 female and 5000 male saplings in the country, these will be grown on before planting at a suitable place in the village. His proposal is on the Village Green as the Black Poplar ideally should be grown around 20m away from any other tree. To reserve any trees or hedgerow, please contact Trevor Smith on 01206 262760 or at smith.2.trevor@gmail.com

Footpath Warden's Report

There were no developments over the past month.

Police Report

There was one crime reported in the Leavenheath area in November 2022

1 x Violence and Sexual Offence - On or near Plough Lane

Unable to prosecute suspect

Village Green Report

The Leavenheath Playground Action Group have now received confirmation that Proludic have completed their initial 3D design and we have a zoom call on the 24th January to go through their drawings along with quotation. They are still awaiting the proposal from another provider Playquip. It is the intention of the group for the proposed plans to be presented to both the Parish Council and the residents of the village, once we have some designs available.

Leavenheath Events Sub-Committee

The first real event, Santas Sleigh, proved to be a great success with the feedback way beyond expectations. They had another productive meeting this month and the proposed events are now beginning to take shape, these include The Fun and Games Night, St George's Day Breakfast, a summer fete on the Village Green and a Snail Race Evening. Our next meeting was the following evening. The Parish Council and Village Hall Committee have been invited to undertake a dry run of the Fun & Games Night on 28th January 2023

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker attended and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He confirmed that December was a quiet month at the District Council and with Elections approaching, mainly housekeeping items were to be dealt with. The Cabinet agreed to take on the New Health Centre lease near Kingfisher which is sub-let back to Hardwick House Surgery. The Town and Parish Liaison meetings are back which encourage engagement. He spoke briefly in tribute to Richard whom he had only known since 2015, however, he regarded him as very supportive and good for the Village - a very sad loss. Y Roder then asked L Parker about a new grit bin for Harrow Street. It was confirmed that County Highways approve new grit bin locations for siting and emptying. The Parish Council funds the purchase of one and undertakes to replace it in the future when needed. It was agreed for Y Roder to make a case and forward details to the Clerk for the application - **Action Y Roder and Clerk.**

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: J Finch (County Cllr) had sent apologies and his report in advance. This covered the £500M Devolution Deal that was signed off on 8th December 2022 by The Levelling Up Secretary of State, Michael Gove. The deal would bring investment, affordable homes, devolved adult education budget, transport settlement and improved energy efficiency in homes. The deal is subject to local consultation and an elected Council Leader. The 23/24 budget was contributed to by the on-line survey results and the aim is to protect front-line services and increase funding towards Adult Care and Children's Services, tree management and support for Citizens Advice. Further host families are needed for Ukrainian Refugees. Cassius won a Best Elderly Care Technology Solution Award. Winter gritting is well underway. Suffolk archives on-line gallery is showcasing the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions continue. The Chairman explained he was considering depositing some old paperwork at the new Archive facility in Ipswich.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING UPDATE: Babergh District Council had completed their regulation 16 - 6 week consultation. The Examiners Report had been received. D Kingham led the discussion and reminded that at last meeting the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group needed to decide whether to accept the Examiners recommendations. The Chairman of the Steering Group and D Kingham had various discussions with L Parker liaising with the District Council and following much deliberation it was decided that the Neighbourhood Plan offers some protection despite the disappointment of the change to some of the wording. The view now is that it should be adopted as soon as possible. The Referendum may be delayed due to the Elections in May, however, reassurances have been given that as now it is between Examination and Referendum, it should be afforded full weight.

CORRESPONDENCE: On-going correspondence was noted by the meeting. The Chairman confirmed the offer received from the County Council to share the cost of producing further walk leaflets. Members were minded to accept subject to some updates to the map since the original version was produced. The Chairman agreed to liaise in this respect - **Action Chairman.**

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: It was noted the postponed roadworks were completed the previous week and cats eyes have been removed.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as at 4th January 2023 were £54902.51 in the Community Account and £15513.87 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £70416.38.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>As at 4th January</u>			
Funds Transfer	815.59	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	300.00	Community Pantry	S137 Charity donation
Funds Transfer	240.00	PKF Littlejohn LLP	External Audit Fee
Funds Transfer	39.00	Leavenheath Village Ha	Hall Hire
Funds Transfer	19.99	P Mortlock	Equipment Expenses

It was confirmed the database provided by the District Council ahead of the Finance Sub Committee Meeting was correct.

In accordance with the recommendations from the Finance Sub-Committee:

1. A small uplift of £1% on the Precept for residents giving a Precept of £19728 was proposed. It was noted that a standstill budget in a cost of living crisis would have been preferable, however, it was difficult to make the budget balance this year due to increasing costs. The 1% increase is a cut in real terms due to the high inflation figures.
 2. £10,000 from the new unallocated reserves is recommended to go towards the Playground
 3. £2000 of the unallocated reserves is still to be allocated
 4. £9729 to be allocated from our CIL monies (included within this figure are the contributions received in the first year CIL was allocated to Leavenheath which will soon be out of time) to go to the Playground
 5. Therefore a total of £36,000 to be pledged towards the new Playground including PC reserves, PC CIL and the Jubilee proceeds
 6. This Council continues to adhere to Pension Regulatory Requirements and the National Pay Scales for Clerks
 7. The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to be added to the February Agenda for review
- **Action Clerk**

The Chairman proposed all points above are approved. This was seconded by C Morgan and unanimously carried. The Chairman confirmed that he had completed the Police Commissioner Survey and recommended others to do the same.

It was agreed to remove the purchase of a Football Table from the Agenda as S Whitelaw has loaned her table and the events committee were working with that for now.

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: It was noted that Richard Cowell played a key role in the project to improve Cycling in the Village. This will be picked up as soon as other pressures ease. It was noted the Santa's Sleigh was very well received in the Village.

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: The Chairman now has full access to Parish Online, however the water hydrants cannot be added to the map.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS : The Community Speed Watch Program is now ready to commence, with all the necessary equipment and volunteers ready to begin the program. The training will be rolled out to the other members of the group, their first active session on the road was booked for the 23rd of January. D Kingham shared an update from The Minister of State for Energy and Climate on the ambition to generate home grown energy including 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030. This relates more to the East Anglia Green pylon project as the local scheme is at a more advanced stage. The aim is to minimise negative impacts on communities while building a cheaper, greener and more secure energy system for Britain. Various investment is underway towards this aim.

The meeting closed at **8.30 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 18th January 2023

The following Decision was confirmed by the Planning Authority: -

A) Planning Permission was granted for holiday lodges and garage/cartlodge at Oak Cottage, Kingsland Lane - **DC/22/05478**. R Bellenie agreed to follow up with L Parker.

B) Planning Permission was granted for two storey side extension at 23 Wrights Way, Leavenheath - **DC/22/05140**.

The following applications and planning matters were discussed: -

1) Belynna Cottage, Nayland Road - application for two storey dwelling - **DC/22/05099**.

The Parish Council had **No Objections** between meetings, provided only one dwelling occupies the entire plot and that consideration is given to removing permitted development rights to ensure that the property remains of an appropriate scale.

2) Oak Cottage, Kingsland Lane - application for holiday lodges - **DC/22/05478**.

Objections were submitted between meetings as a number of factors for refusal remain applicable. These were out-lined in this Councils response.

3) The Lake House, Stoke Road - application for solar panels - **DC/22/06082**.

The Parish Council had **No Objections** between meetings.

4) Any other Urgent Planning items: It was noted the Wedding Venue plans from the Golf Club had been Refused and the Decision Notice had not been received. A search was made on the Planning site and it was agreed to circulate the written Decision Notice - **Action Clerk**.