

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 1st November 2023 at 6.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall.

PRESENT: P Mortlock (Chairman), C Morgan, R Bellenie, D Kingham, S Whitelaw, D Hattrell (Clerk), J Finch (County Cllr), L Parker (District Cllr) and at least 125 members of the public attended in person. 2 attended by Video link.

The Meeting was scheduled at an earlier time for an extended Public Forum on the subject of current plans for developments in the Parish.

PUBLIC FORUM: At least 125 residents attended the extended public forum starting from 6 p.m to express views about the proposed developments. The majority of residents attending were against the proposals. Cllr Kingham explained the current Planning Policy framework including Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan, the emerging District Council Joint Local Plan and the wider National Planning Policy framework. The Parish Council has been going through the 3 plans in this context and reading all the responses from the Consultees. The Parish Council will be stressing the cumulative impact of these applications along with the Bramford to Twinstead pylons. Two of the applications will go before Planning Committee. The District Council does have a 5 year land supply. Currently Highways are objecting to the plan for 23 homes and it also doesn't meet the policies in Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan. Highways hadn't responded to the Orchard site application for 40 dwellings. The Parish Council was mindful that the applications may increase the risk of flooding. The emerging Local Plan down-graded Leavenheath to 3 hamlets and planned for a minimum of 44 homes and allocated the Orchard site. This was all taken into consideration in developing the Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan. If there are any experts in relation to the flood risk in the Village, the Parish Council would like to hear from them? As it stood, the Parish Council were objecting to all three applications as the deadlines were approaching. The detailed responses were to be available to see on the Planning Portal and the reasons currently involve Planning Policy, particularly the Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan, highways, increased flood risk, cumulative impact of all four applications (including the Pylons).

Questioning then followed. These covered:-

- drainage/sewerage,
- current water pressure issues,
- water mains bursting and not up to the job
- highways safety/ access/ increased congestion
- the narrowing dangerous pavement along the A134
- the 21 mature trees around the perimeter of the Orchard site - the planning consultant for the site confirmed the majority of the mature trees were to be protected
- lack of Doctors/Dentists/Schools - non sustainable village
- one of the owners for the Orchard site explained they wanted a development all would be proud of and it would be in keeping with the 3 hamlets within Leavenheath
- loss of daffodils along the grass verge
- lack of Local Needs Housing
- deficiencies with Planning Enforcement
- lack of engineers reports on drains and sewers for the 40 homes - the planning consultant confirmed the report has been done and recently submitted
- it was suggested that the Parish Council employs a Planning Consultant to scrutinize all three applications, *whilst this could be considered there were time constraints and it would be costly.

- District Cllr Lee Parker then explained the Planning Committee process and the scope of a legal challenge if the Decisions were contrary to the Village's Views. Residents could observe the Planning Committee in person or on streaming. He praised the fact the Village has a Neighbourhood Plan which must be adhered to. Before that, the Village would not have a say. The importance of referring to the Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan in comments submitted by residents was stressed.

- concern was expressed about protection of the natural environment and hedgerows

- there was a complaint that the Development Notices were not fully visible, so some residents would be unaware of the proposals

Following the questioning the residents were urged to submit their comments to the Planning Authority as only a limited number were appearing on the Planning Portal. A resident updated the Meeting on her conversation with the Planning Officer giving additional time to receive comments. She stressed to the residents in the Meeting, there was still time to get their views submitted. District Cllr Parker spoke positively about the Parish Council and what can and can't be done to challenge applications which would inevitably be brought by landowners.

There was a 15 Minute break before opening the Parish Council Meeting.

APOLOGIES: were received and accepted from Y Roder who attended via video link.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 18TH OCTOBER 2023: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: Nothing was raised.

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. The reports were limited due to the attention being diverted towards the planning and that the previous Meeting was only 2 weeks earlier.

Village Hall Report

There had not been a Meeting since the last report on 18th October. The Committee now meet every 2 months.

Tree Warden's Report

No report was given.

Footpath Warden's Report

No report was given.

Police Report

One crime reported in September.

1 x Violence and Sexual offence on or near Harrow Street. Crime currently under investigation.

Village Green Report

No report was given.

Leavenheath Events

S Whitelaw had agreed the expenditure budget between Meetings as agreed at the October Meeting. A further amount in the region of £250 was being sought for Santa's Sleigh Event. This was approved. The Parish Council's Public Liability cover was discussed which is wide, however, the importance of the Events Sub Committee working hard to identify and minimise the risks of staging Events was stressed. The Motor Risk of the Santa's Sleigh will not come under the Parish Council Insurance Policy. The importance of having regular attendance by the Events Committee to Parish Council Meetings was stressed going forward.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker attended and confirmed the situation regarding the flood effort. Considerable Community Infrastructure Levy grants have been distributed out to Communities. Now the Village has a Neighbourhood Plan, 25% of the CIL monies goes directly to the Parish Council to spend in the Parish. L Parker clarified that money towards school provision arising from developments largely come from a 106 agreement.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: J Finch (County Cllr) attended and confirmed the Government has allocated £1.8 M for 2 years to Suffolk to enhance the local bus network. An online consultation has been launched to seek views on the County Councils budget. Large scale energy projects are being offered connections at National Grid at locations in Suffolk subject to Planning Consent ahead of speaking to Councils or communities. Funding is being offered to support projects aimed at reducing the number of people in Suffolk excluded from the benefits of digital technology. Interim reports show more than 200 properties were flooded by Storm Babet in Suffolk. A further consultation has launched on the future of Suffolk Libraries. Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions continue. The Parish Council reinforced to J Finch that they would like a regular bus service for the Village. J Finch is chasing for better support towards the Honey Tye drainage. L Parker agreed to research whether CIL monies could be used to hire expertise in this area. D Kingham thanked J Finch for all the work he has put in regarding the pylons which was made clear to him recently in the research he had been conducting. J Finch agreed to take away with him to issue raised in the Public Forum of the pavement along the A134 needing scraping back.

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

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: There was no progress to report.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as at 1st November 2023 were £58071.38 in the Community Account and £15607.22 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £73678.60.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>As at 1st November</u>			
Funds Transfer	136.40	The Stoke by N Club	L/Events - Big Breakfast

Funds Transfer	118.23	R Garrett	L/Events - Big Breakfast
Funds Transfer	60.00	S Whitelaw	Leaflets
Funds Transfer	1700.00	The Stoke by N Club	VGreen Maintenance
Funds Transfer	810.68	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	326.04	Tree & Lawn Co Ltd	VGreen Maintenance

Financial Reports provided by D Kingham - The principles of the Traffic and Speed Survey and Vehicle Activated devices were agreed, however, it was recognised that further work is required and Finance Sub Committee could consider how much could be reserved in this regard.

Review of Model Publication Scheme

It was agreed to add this to the Agenda for the December Meeting - **Action Clerk.**

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: Nothing was raised.

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: Nothing was raised.

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

The meeting closed at **9.15 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 1st November 2023

The following Decisions were confirmed by the Planning Authority: -

A) Planning Permission was granted for construction of side and rear extensions at 10 Edies Lane - **DC/23/04100**.

B) Planning Permission was granted for garage conversion at 13 Campion Way - **DC/23/04514**.
C Morgan had declared an Interest. The Parish Council had **No Objections** between Meetings.

The following applications and planning matters were discussed: -

1) Householder Application for extensions at 81 High Road - **DC/23/04938**. The Parish Council had **No Objections** between Meetings.

2) Land East of Blackthorn Way and Campion Way. Full Planning Application to erect 23 dwellings - **DC/23/03653**.

This application was discussed in the Public Forum and the Parish Council were drafting objections.

3) Outline Planning Application for 14 dwellings and garages (including 4 affordable dwellings) on Land West Of A134 Honey Tye - **DC/23/04425**.

This application was discussed in the Public Forum and the Parish Council were drafting objections.

4) Outline Planning Application for 40 dwellings (including 14 affordable dwellings) on Land South of High Road - **DC/23/04452**.

This application was discussed in the Public Forum and the Parish Council were drafting objections.

5) Any other Urgent Planning items: An official update is awaited regarding the application for Stoke by Nayland Club as a Wedding Venue.