

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllr P Mortlock (Chair), Cllrs C Morgan, P Breary, J Evans, P King, T Taylor and S Whitelaw. D Hattrell (Clerk), and 3 members of the public attended in person and 1 attended by Video link. Cllr J Evans was delayed, however, attended ahead of the end of the Meeting.

PUBLIC FORUM: A resident attended in person and expressed his disappointment in relation to the poorly managed verges, hedgerows and pavements in the village. It was explained to him that the responsibility lies with other authorities who have been chased. The Clerk explained that we received similar concerns from other residents between meetings and Cllr L Parker has chased the District Council and Cllr J Finch the County Council and those residents have been informed. This Parish Council (PC) is attempting to get an estimate to clear the A134 pavement in view of health and safety concerns. County Highways have confirmed it is not high enough on their priorities. Another resident suggested a team of volunteers could undertake the work. The first resident went onto complain about delays with the new playground project. The Chair asked if he would be prepared to volunteer with either the playground project or pavement clearance. He confirmed he was not willing to help and stated he believed it is the PC's responsibility.

APOLOGIES: were received and from County Cllr J Finch and District Cllr L Parker.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 5th JUNE 2024: 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.

Village Hall Report

Unfortunately, the Village Hall committee have received complaints about the car park being used by people who are not hiring/using the hall. As a reminder, this car park is **private** so please be considerate and park elsewhere in the village to allow space for paying hirers of the hall. Notices have been left on cars and registrations have been noted.

The electric car charger has been temporarily disconnected while the committee negotiates a new contract going forward. They apologise for any inconvenience and will keep everyone up to date with progress.

The Babergh Living Well in Winter grant has now finished, and positive feedback and thanks have been given to Babergh DC. Many people, not just from our village, have benefited from half-price tickets and free hot drinks. Please see the noticeboards and LSPN for details of upcoming films.

The new broadband connection is active thanks to hard work from Paul Mortlock (PC Chair), this gives a financial saving going forward.

With the sad news of Ladybirds closing, this presents an opportunity for anyone wishing to hire the hall on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from August onwards. Please speak to the booking secretary, Jill Dunkley, if you are interested.

Tree Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Footpath Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Police Report

There were two crimes reported in April 2024:

One Violence and Sexual Offence - on or near The Old Road
Currently under investigation by the police

One Other theft near Park/Open Space (SBN Golf Club)
Currently under investigation by the police

Village Green Report

The Playground group have been meeting contractors in relation to the new playground quotations. There are some variations with the specifications suggested. It was suggested they concentrate on play equipment favoured by residents in the survey. This is important to provide evidence to support funding applications. The cost of the fencing in relation to the project is being considered. The main issue is dog mess, so the project design could attempt to help address this without the need for full fencing. The disadvantages of fencing include restricting escape routes when children are being bullied. The playground is away from major roads. The criteria of the major funders need to be considered with project design.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker was unable to attend, and no report was provided.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch was unable to attend, and a report was to be provided for Councillors at a future date following the meeting.

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: The Lion Enforcement of the Vehicle Activated Signage was with Cllr L Parker and Cllr J Finch to liaise and chase. The locations had been agreed with Babergh DC Planning, however, it was important to check whether County Highways had approved the locations and the contractor to carry out the work. Once this is established, it should be a case for Babergh DC Planning to chase as this was a condition of the Planning that hasn't been delivered - **Action Cllr L Parker and Cllr J Finch.**

LEAVENHEATH EVENTS: G Deeks confirmed all the tickets have been sold for the Bingo buffet. The Santa's Sleigh is likely to go ahead again and then the New Year's Eve Event thereafter.

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

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as of 28th June 2024 were £15,688.80 in the Community Account and £52,278.74 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £67,967.54.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>As at 1st July</u>			
Funds Transfer	993.60	Babergh DC	Bin Empty 24.25
Funds Transfer	1008.44	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	344.40	Tree & Lawn Co	VG Maintenance
Funds Transfer	292.63	Glasdon	Dog bin renewal
Funds Transfer	157.39	P Mortlock	Posts
Funds Transfer	96.00	Geosphere Ltd	Digital Mapping
Funds Transfer	328.80	SALC	Internal Audit
Funds Transfer	74.75	Leavenheath VH	Hall hire

Internal Audit Report

All matters were approved, and some recommendations were made for the future. The recommendations were as follows: -

- 1) The PC was reminded that new model Financial Regulations are available for our annual review – note when we review. The Clerk agreed to look at this document and Cllr S Whitelaw agreed to review the Standing Orders – **Action Clerk and Cllr S Whitelaw.**
- 2) We should include pence in our CIL Return – the Clerk has already correctly submitted to the District Council. The new documents had been uploaded to the website.
- 3) Although we include the External Audit Report on the website, we should also include the conclusion of audit form – **Action Clerk to provide this year when available.**
- 4) Quarterly budget reviews are now addressed by Scribe Accounting
- 5) Recommended we tailor the Model Publication Scheme to our circumstances – this remains outstanding.
- 6) The register of interests and retired Cllrs listed on DC Website – Clerk has checked today, and our retired Cllrs are no longer showing. Just Cllr Penny King to add which was in hand.
- 7) Consider maintaining website in line with Local Transparency Code 2015. Cllr S Whitelaw agreed to look at this item – **Action Cllr S Whitelaw.**

External Audit

The documents have been submitted in good time ahead of the External Audit and were auto acknowledged.

Donation to Sudbury Citizens Advice

Following discussion, the Chair proposed a donation of **£500**. This was seconded by Cllr P Breary and unanimously carried – **Action Clerk to organize the funds transfer.**

Any other urgent financial matters – The first quarter expenditure against budget report had been circulated and this was noted by the meeting. Members commented favourably on this document.

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: Contact had been made from St Matthews Church for CIL funds towards accessible toilet and servery projects. It was agreed to put the Chair of Friends of St Matthews Church in touch with the CIL team to take up their offer to come out at an early stage in this project – **Action Clerk.**

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: The Chair confirmed that 2 dog waste bins were installed. The poles for the noticeboard had arrived and were yet to be installed. 2 memorial benches were ready to be installed on the Village Green. Cllr J Evans queried what was needed re the brick plinth for the Village Sign and then agreed to seek a quotation – **Action Cllr J Evans.**

LADY ANNE WINDSOR TRUST: Local Needs Housing Project. The Chair agreed to continue to liaise with the Charity and ask for this item to be put back on the agenda in the future – **Action Chair.**

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH: Cllr C Morgan agreed to organize some posters to advertise for further volunteers – **Action C Morgan.**

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS: It was noted this PC has policies to review on an annual basis. The meeting was closed briefly to allow a resident to speak. He complained that his suggestion of Village Gateways was not addressed. The Clerk explained it was researched and did form an Agenda item at the previous meeting. Members had mixed views and one point in favour would be the potential to encourage the traffic to slow down. The Clerk had asked County Highways for criteria as their permission would be required. This was in the Minutes and the resident was encouraged to read them.

The meeting closed at **8.15 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 3rd July 2024

The following applications and planning matters were discussed: -

- 1) Application for works to protected trees at Oak Cottage, Breach Grove, Kingsland Lane – **DC/24/02823.** (deadline for response 15th July)

The Chair confirmed a visit to inspect the trees was being arranged and a response will be provided to the Clerk ahead of the deadline.

- 2) Any other urgent Planning items including the VAS – condition of The Lion Development. See details under the Highways Agenda item.