

MINUTES of the ANNUAL MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs P Mortlock, S Whitelaw, T Taylor, P Breary and J Evans. D Hattrell (Clerk), L Parker (District Cllr) and 5 members of the public attended in person and 1 attended by Video link.

PUBLIC FORUM: A resident raised the idea of considering village gateways on 3 access points to the Parish. Various designs are available and can look like a white/brown fencing design on the verges with the Village name, speed limit and perhaps a request to drive carefully. Another resident mentioned that he was ignored when he suggested village gateways previously. It was agreed to investigate and include as an Agenda item at the next meeting – **Action Chair and Clerk.**

ELECTION OF CHAIR: Cllr S Whitelaw proposed Cllr Paul Mortlock continue in the Chair for a further year. This was seconded by Cllr J Evans and unanimously carried.

The declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly completed.

APOLOGIES: were received and accepted from Cllr Clare Morgan. County Cllr James Finch had also sent apologies.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 3rd APRIL 2024: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: It was noted Cllr C Morgan is still organizing a poster for the Annual Parish Meeting.

APPOINTMENTS OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SUB COMMITTEES:

All resolutions are made by the full Parish Council at Meetings. The representatives and sub committees provide more focus on key areas between meetings.

Vice Chair – it was agreed to defer this item until Cllr C Morgan is available to attend.

Finance Sub Committee – Cllr S Whitelaw will continue with Debbie Hattrell, the responsible finance officer, and will be joined by Cllr J Evans.

Leavenheath Events Sub Committee - Greg Deeks, Anita Deeks, John Garrett, Ruth Garrett, Nicky Weston-Plumb, Jill Dunkley, Chris Barker, Cllr Tina Taylor, and Helen Sharpe.

Planning Subgroup & Strategy – Cllr P Mortlock, Cllr C Morgan, and Cllr T Taylor.

Footpaths – Cllr S Whitelaw agreed to organize a poster for the Annual Parish Meeting to help recruit volunteers to check on specific paths – **Action Cllr S Whitelaw.**

VH rep – Cllr S Whitelaw.

VG rep – Cllr P Mortlock, Chair.

Community Speedwatch – It was agreed for the Chair to ask for further support to this scheme at the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr J Evans confirmed he was willing to assist.

Risk Assessment – The Clerk explained how this item has been covered in the past. It was agreed to defer this item.

Others – Attention needs to be put to recruitment of Parish Councillors.

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 committee met in April and received the sad news that Ladybirds would close at the end of July. They were thanked for their huge commitment to the village over the past 30+ years and the committee are doing all they can to support the considerable logistics of closure.

This obviously leaves the village without a pre-school and a gap in our regular term-time bookings on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays. We have already had enquiries regarding hiring but if there are businesses, clubs or societies who would like to apply to use the hall, please contact the booking secretary, Jill Dunkley.

Film Night continues to be well supported thanks to the Babergh Living Well in Winter grant. 4th May film "Joyride" and 1st June "An Unlikely Pilgrimage" are still £2/ticket with a free hot drink so please come along to enjoy the special offer. Would you be interested in helping choose the films going forwards? Could you spare half an hour on a Saturday morning to help set up the refreshments for Film Night? They intend to have a Rota so that this does not fall on the same people every month. Many hands make light work, and any help would be greatly appreciated. The Village Hall Committee will give a report at the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 21st May 7.30pm. Committee members will be there to answer questions you may have about the roles we have available to help keep the hall running for all those in the village.

Tree Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Footpath Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Police Report

One crime was reported in the Leavenheath area in February.

Criminal damage and arson on or near Plough Lane - Includes damage to buildings and vehicles and deliberate damage by fire.

The crime is currently being investigated.

Village Green Report

The Chair reported on delays with grass cutting in view of the dampness of the Village Green. Some holes have been filled and re-grassed.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker attended and confirmed they were re-appointing Committee's at the District Council and in relation to car parking charges Scrutiny Committee has brought the subject back to Cabinet to re-consider. It was deemed that the potential for 1hr free parking had not been properly considered. Cllr S Whitelaw raised the issue of fouling at the walk through at Maple Way. Information had been obtained from the Environmental Officer about the use of cameras and it seemed too onerous, however, further signage and deterrents were to be considered between meetings.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch had sent his apologies and, in his report, issued in advance it was confirmed that over 400 Suffolk Roads are set to be surfaced this year and the schedules are available online. 99% of pupils receive a preferred primary school place. A new independent Chair has been appointed to lead Special Educational Needs and Disabilities improvement. More Suffolk homes are eligible for energy improvements. A new survey has been launched to find out which aspects of nature in Suffolk are most important to residents. Virtual Fostering and Adoption sessions continue. Locally the A134 drainage was being investigated.

CORRESPONDENCE: On-going correspondence was noted by the meeting. The request from a nearby Village for permission to erect 2 banners was approved between meetings. It was agreed to allow potential liberal democrat MP to attend and observe a future PC Meeting, however, he could not use his attendance as a political platform to address the meeting – **Action Clerk**.

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: It was agreed for the Clerk to remind the Sudbury Community Wardens to provide a quote to clear the pavement along the A134 in the Village – **Action Clerk to ask them to liaise with the Chair**.

LEAVENHEATH EVENTS: The budget for the forthcoming Bingo event was approved at the previous meeting. Members debated and then resolved to pay £100 for the top prize at the Bingo. The Clerk had obtained advice from SALC and it was noted that this is a lawful use of PC funds. A good cause to be supported with any profit from the event is the Village Playground. This was agreed. The budget for a potential New Year's Eve party in the Village Hall had been circulated ahead of the meeting and this was duly approved with some reservations due to tight margins to break-even. It was agreed to pay the deposit of £200 to secure the entertainment – **Action Clerk**.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as of 29th April 2024 were £22,748.69 in the Community Account and £52,083.96 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £74,832.65.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>As at 1st May</u>			
Funds Transfer	788.40	Scribe Accounting	Accounting Subs.

Funds Transfer	1008.44	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs.
Funds Transfer	528.38	SALC	Subscriptions
Funds Transfer	344.40	Tree & Lawn Co Ltd	VG Maintenance
Funds Transfer	121.33	R Garrett	LE - Fun & Games
Funds Transfer	6.50	J Dunkley	LE - Fun & Games

Leavenheath Events - see the Leavenheath Events Agenda item for the financial resolutions made.

Quotes for Dog bins and noticeboards

The Chair agreed to send further quotes to members between meetings - **Action Chair.**

Accounting and Annual Governance Statements 2023/24

These had been circulated in good time ahead of the Meeting. Following discussion, the Chair proposed acceptance of the Annual Accounting and Governance Statements for the year ending 31st March 2024. This was seconded by Cllr J Evans, unanimously carried and the documents were duly signed.

CIL Return for period ending 31st March 2024.

This had been circulated in good time ahead of the Meeting. Cllr S Whitelaw proposed approval which was seconded by Cllr J Evans and unanimously carried.

Letter from Bank identifying their business customers.

This had been completed ahead of the meeting and it was agreed for the Chair and Clerk to sign and for the Clerk to post it back to our Bank - **Action Clerk.**

Any other urgent financial matters

It was agreed to put all the relevant accounting forms on the website in the interests of transparency - **Action Clerk and Cllr S Whitelaw.**

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: It was agreed to follow up the suggestion of Village gateways raised in the public forum - **Action Chair and Clerk.**

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: The Chair reminded the meeting that the brick plinth at the foot of the Village Sign needs rebuilding. This will need to be completed ahead of re-fixing the newly restored Village Sign.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING: 21st May at 7.30 p.m.

Members were asked to arrive around 7 p.m to help set up the hall. Cllr P Breary had sent his apologies for the Annual Parish Meeting. Graham Walker from Lady Anne Windsor Charity will be a guest speaker. The Clerk is to put together the agenda in liaison with the Chair and circulate it ahead of the Meeting - **Action Clerk.**

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH: It was agreed to encourage further volunteers at the Annual Parish Meeting – **Action Chair**.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS: Legal advice had been sought regarding the Village Hall as an asset for the Village and it had been agreed for the Parish Council to be the sole trustee for the Village Hall Charity. The Deed cannot be changed; however, an addendum can be made. The Meeting closed briefly to allow a resident to thank the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee for their efforts in this regard as he had been a supporter of preserving the Village Hall as an asset for the Village going forward.

The meeting closed at **8.40 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 1st May 2024

The following Decisions were confirmed by the Planning Authority: -

- A) Planning Permission was granted for single-storey rear extension at 7 Edies Lane – **DC/24/00431**.
- B) Planning Permission was granted for pitched roof over ensuite at 5 Edies Lane – **DC/24/01186**.

The following applications and planning matters were discussed: -

- 1) Orchard Farm, Locks Lane – Householder Application to erect a double garage – **DC/24/01605**.

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

- 2) Any other Urgent Planning items: Vehicle Activated signage update the Lion development. The Clerk had chased the developer to install the signage as it was a condition of the Planning Consent. He had queried a point which District Cllr Lee Parker was following up – **Action Cllr Lee Parker**. On another matter, the site where 23 homes were refused, is now up for sale.