

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 8th January 2024 at 7.00 p.m. at Leavenheath Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllr C Morgan (Chaired the Meeting), Cllrs P Breary, J Evans, P King and S Whitelaw. Three members of the public attended in person and D Hattrell (Clerk) and 1 other attended by Video link.

PUBLIC FORUM: A comment was made about dog poo being left on pavements around the Village. Cllr P King noted that it was also a problem in surrounding villages.

CO-OPTION OF MEMBER: Sue Felgate confirmed her willingness to join the Parish Council (PC). She was duly coopted as Parish Councillor in her absence and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was to be arranged.

APOLOGIES: were received and accepted from Cllr P Mortlock (Chair) and Cllr T Taylor. County Cllr J Finch had also sent his apologies. District Cllr L Parker also confirmed via email in view of other meetings, he may not be able to attend.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 4th DECEMBER 2024: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: The review of the Model Publication Scheme was noted as an Agenda item for the February PC Meeting – **Action Cllr T Taylor and Clerk.**

UPDATES FROM COMMUNITY, ORGANISATIONS AND WARDENS ON URGENT MATTERS:

Reports were provided, where relevant, for the Village Hall, Footpaths, Village Trees, Village Green, Community Woodland and from the Police Website.

Village Hall Report

Cllr S Whitelaw confirmed there was nothing further to report since the last meeting.

Tree Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Footpath Warden's Report

There was nothing to report.

Police Report

Cllr S Whitelaw confirmed the November figures have recently been added to the Police website (see below) and she has reached out to our local Community Police Officer seeking attendance at a future PC Meeting.

1 x Public Order offence (includes offences which cause fear, alarm or distress) on or near The Old Road - Investigation complete, no suspect identified.

Village Green Report

Cllr P Breary updated the meeting about the Playground project confirming the funding secured so far including the 106 grant. The latter is subject to some new policies and the Clerk agreed to work on the policies for adoption by the PC at the February Meeting and the Village Green Charity could then adopt the PC policies. These include Safeguarding, Equality and Health and Safety – **Action Clerk**. The funding strategy has been finalized, and a copy is held with the PC. This saves the issue of reclaiming the VAT along the way. The next step will be to arrange a Village Engagement Event, and a leaflet could be circulated to encourage attendance. Cllr Breary explained he has less time due to a change to his work commitments, however, agreed to take this forward. Consideration was to be given to the location of the zip wire to minimize disruption to neighbouring residents – **Action Cllr P Breary**.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr L Parker was to attend later into the meeting if time allowed. The general report from the District Council (DC) had been circulated and he had emailed details of the Appeal Hearing. The Appeal Hearing will commence at 10AM sharp. It is a public meeting, and people will be free to come and go as is convenient to them. However, the usual format is for the Inspector, who will be Chairing the meeting, to give a summary of the case at the outset before moving to a public session. This is where members of the public will be invited to speak so it is important that anybody wishing to contribute is present at the start of the meeting. He is informed that ordinarily, this is the only opportunity the Inspector will offer and that any other will be entirely at his/her discretion. The meeting isn't time limited so could go on for 2 hours or it could go on for much longer.

In other news, the DC were bombarded just before Christmas with information pertaining to the new National Planning Policy Framework and Devolution. That is partly the reason Cllr Parker has so many meetings to attend. He will have lots of information to impart next month.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch had sent his apologies; however, his report covered the following: -

1. **Devolution and Council Reorganisation:** Suffolk County Council (SCC) were to hold extraordinary meetings on 9th January 2025 to decide whether to join the government's new devolution and reorganisation programme. This could lead to the creation of unitary councils and new Mayoral Authorities.
2. **Loss of Rural Services Grant:** Suffolk will lose £3 million in government funding from April 2025, impacting rural services. This decision has been criticized for disproportionately affecting rural areas.
3. **Energy Projects:** SCC, along with other regional councils, is challenging the National Grid and government on the fairness of energy projects, citing uncoordinated planning and unrealistic decarbonisation targets.
4. **Economic Strategy:** Suffolk's Cabinet has approved a new economic strategy aiming for sustainable growth and innovation, with goals to significantly boost the economy, workforce qualifications, and average wages by 2045.
5. **Fostering and Adoption:** Virtual sessions are available for those interested in fostering or adopting in Suffolk.

It was agreed to ask Cllr Finch to add Cllr Penny King to his group email list for the Parish Council - **Action Clerk**.

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: Progress is being made at Stoke Road. The reflective bollards are on order and monitoring is being scheduled. The double bend warning sign will be cleaned. In relation to the Vehicle Activated Signage, the location for the southbound pole is being investigated by County Highways. The working party for pavement clearance along the A134 will be on the Agenda for the February PC Meeting - **Action Clerk**.

LEAVENHEATH EVENTS: A general banner to use to promote Leavenheath Events and the PC was approved, so this will be ordered. The poster making website subscription was approved. The name has been amended to Leavenheath Parish Council and the year's subscription will be reimbursed - **Action Clerk**. Further receipts were to be scanned and emailed to the Clerk in Cllr T Taylors absence. Although the New Years Eve party was a good event, it did not break even. A meeting was planned to see if there is enough support to organize a Summer Fete. G Deeks was thanked for all the work he is doing for Leavenheath Events.

CORRESPONDENCE: On-going correspondence was noted by the meeting. Correspondence relating to Devolution has been extensive and was noted by the meeting.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as of 2nd January 2025 were £9,956.90 in the Community Account and £52,670.490 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £62,627.39.

The following pre-agreed payments were put through: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
At 2nd January			
Funds Transfer	1056.12	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs
Funds Transfer	10.00	D Hattrell	Reimbursement of Training materials
Funds Transfer	195.20	Cllr T Taylor	L Events - New Years Eve
Funds Transfer	115.15	G Deeks	L Events - Stationery
Funds Transfer	92.65	N Weston-Plumb	L Events - New Years Eve
Funds Transfer	92.00	Keith Avis Printers	L Events - New Years Eve
Funds Transfer	17.99	J Decort-Effeny	L Events - New Years Eve
Funds Transfer	11.99	R Garrett	L Events - New Years Eve
Funds Transfer	46.02	R Garrett	L Events - Santa's Sleigh
Funds Transfer	20.16	G Deeks	L Events - Santa's Sleigh
Funds Transfer	48.00	Leavenheath Village Hall	Hall hire

Precept Form - This was duly signed based on the resolution at the December PC Meeting. Again, this was subject to the final tax base figures which were still awaited. The Precept will increase by 5% giving a total of £22,029.00 for the next financial year. The Charging form was duly completed and signed subject to final confirmation of the figures from the District Council **The tax base figures have since been confirmed as correct and the charging form was submitted by the Clerk.

Budget Review - The third quarter budget review has been circulated and the financial position noted. No questions were raised.

Any Other Urgent financial matters - Nothing was raised.

IDEAS TO IMPROVE THE VILLAGE: Nothing was raised.

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: A progress report was awaited from Cllr J Evans between meetings in relation to the reinstatement of the Village Sign and the installation of the new Noticeboard – **Action Cllr Evans.**

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

The meeting closed at **7.57 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 8th January 2025

The following Planning Decisions were reported: -

- 1) **Householder application to extend Webbs End, 27b Edies Lane – DC/24/04691. Planning Permission had been granted.**
- 2) **Planning Permission was granted** for single storey front extension at 18 Oaklands – DC/24/04851.

The following Planning Applications were discussed: -

- A) The process for the Appeal Hearing (Full Planning Application Appeal for 23 dwellings on land east of Blackthorn Way and Champion Way – DC/23/03653) had been outlined by District Cllr L Parker via email. He had agreed to forward the agenda once received.
- B) Any other urgent Planning items – we were waiting for confirmation regarding the southbound pole for Vehicle Activated Signage currently from County Highways. This had been chased.