

MINUTES of the MEETING of LEAVENHEATH PARISH COUNCIL held on Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 7.30 p.m. by Video Conferencing.

PRESENT: P Mortlock (Chairman), C Morgan, R Cowell, S Whitelaw, D Kingham, R Bellenie, T Smith, Y Roder, D Hattrell (Clerk), J Finch (County Cllr), L Parker (District Cllr) and Nigel Taylor who was invited to join the Parish Council.

PUBLIC FORUM: Nothing was raised as no members of the public attended.

APOLOGIES: No apologies were given.

CO-OPTION OF MEMBER: Nigel Taylor was invited to join the Parish Council by Co-option. This took place. The Clerk was to send the relevant Declaration of Acceptance and Registration of Interests forms for completion - **Action Clerk.**

Nigel Taylor duly joined the meeting as a member.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Nothing was raised.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2ND DECEMBER 2020: These were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: R Cowell took the opportunity to remind the Chairman that the Risk Assessment for the Village Green was awaited. He offered to help where he could in this respect.

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

Reports were provided from the Village Hall, Footpath Warden (which is available as usual on the Parish Council website), Tree Wardens, Village Green, Community Woodland and from the Police Website.

Village Hall Report

The committee continue to meet at least once a month via Zoom.

Ladybirds are still the only user of the hall three days a week for children of essential workers only. The committee have invested in a fogging machine to ensure the hall is as safe as possible and to supplement the rigorous cleaning done by Ladybirds. This will help when they can finally reopen the hall to other users. They continue to follow government advice with regards to full reopening but no date has been set. The success and progress of vaccinations in the area will be crucial to this decision. They have had an enquiry from the District Council about the 6th May Elections.

Tree Warden's Report

The tree nursery continues to develop as discussed last month and the Tree Warden has taken delivery of 400 additional saplings from the Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) and the Suffolk County Council (SCC), made up of Oak, Hornbeam, Field Maple, Wild Cherry, Crab Apple, Silver Birch and Wild Service. With the sole objective of providing more trees for the parish and surrounding villages, whether it be in woods or on public and private property. These trees, along with protectors and stakes will be provided free of charge to both residents and businesses in the parish. Anyone interested can contact him - Trevor Smith - on 01206 262760.

He has also been in discussion with the SCC about Royston Wood and had a meeting arranged with Gary Battell, the Woodland Advisor, with a view to look at the management of the wood in terms of thinning out and replanting. Three meetings have taken place with Melanie Boyce a local resident who has raised over £1,000 for planting trees in South Suffolk. Melanie has also offered to assist him with Tree Warden duties. They are setting up an initiative entitled "Plant a Tree for2020" and had a call arranged with the STWN and the SCC to discuss the aims and objectives of the project. Finally, he has approached Boxford and Assington Parish Councils to offer assist them with Tree Warden duties.

Police Report

3 x Violence and Sexual Offences - near the Village Hall

1 x Other theft - off Harrow Street

These were the crimes reported in November 2020

Village Green Report

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Parish Council for covering the cost of the hedge cutting.

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr Lee Parker attended and updated the meeting on the busy time at the District Council including the issuing of further Covid grants. The Councillors and Officers are still mostly working from home. The draft budget has been put forward. There are proposals to charge for parking which led to opposition and will be debated by full Council.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch attended and reported on the continued focus on Covid 19 with a third of the total number of Coronavirus cases in Suffolk being recorded in the past 2 weeks. There is specific focus on the area including the Parishes of Boxford, Leavenheath and Nayland and surrounding parishes and hamlets. The message is stick with the guidance and it is also noted testing has increased in the County which means more cases are being detected. Details of the Vaccination centres and Hubs in Suffolk have been circulated with others expected to go live shortly. The aim is that everyone lives less than half hour drive away from a centre. Appointments will be made by the centres, people should wait for their invite and not call them in the meantime. The Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore has published his proposals for the policing element of the Council Tax Precept for next financial year and he is asking for thoughts via an electronic survey by 28th January. A new digital resource has been launched for home schooling as part of the Keep Suffolk Moving Campaign. The Primary School Application deadline has passed. J Finch has allocated funds to the local food banks the churches are running. Further virtual Fostering and Adoption sessions are scheduled.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING UPDATE: The Neighbourhood Planning Group continue to meet. The next stage is the public consultation which is made difficult by the Covid situation, however, they are pressing on. After the consultation, they will write the draft plan. They are working on the non designated heritage assets list and will need to contact relevant owners in this respect. The village sign and village hall will be included in this research.

CORRESPONDENCE: On-going correspondence were discussed.

URGENT HIGHWAYS SAFETY MATTERS: Options were being considered to prevent unauthorised access via Kingsland Lane which is causing damage to the path surface. K Verlander, SCC Right of Way was attending a meeting the following day to investigate. J Finch suggested the costs could be shared between Leavenheath and Nayland with Wissington Parishes.

FINANCE: The Bank Balances as at 4th January 2021 are £45716.85 in the Community Account and £15508.13 in the Rate Reward Account making a total of £61224.98.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Amount	Payee	Details
<u>As at 4th January</u>			
Funds Transfer	771.57	Clerk/HMRC/SCC	Staffing costs

The budget calculations had been refined with the taxbase figures and grant details issued by the District Council and circulated again to members. R Bellenie had a Zoom call with the Clerk to discuss the budget in more detail ahead of the Parish Council Meeting. Following discussion a Precept of **£19105** was agreed. This represents 0% increase to residents for next financial year. It was noted the CIL monies need to be spent within 5 years. It was therefore agreed to put CIL on the **Agenda for the February Meeting - Action Clerk**. The Clerk was to look out the returns to check when each sum was received and R Bellenie was to re-circulate the criteria as she has done so previously - **Action Clerk and R Bellenie**.

Attention then turned to the funding of a landscape and biodiversity audit as suggested by the Neighbourhood Planning Group. This would be undertaken by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The cost is £1500 plus VAT. Advice could be taken from the Consultants in relation to the sharing of the findings. Following discussion, it was resolved to proceed with the audit and meet the cost - **Action Neighbourhood Planning Group to issue the instructions**.

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS: During the month T Smith visited all four notice boards in the village, two of which are metal framed, the others being of wooden construction. The wooden structures will soon need replacing in particular the one in Old Road. T Smith proposed replacement of the Old Road Noticeboard in the next financial year, the one in High Road has probably another couple of years life and he is happy to give it a clean and varnish. It was agreed to put the **Old Road Noticeboard** on the **Agenda as a Finance item for the February Meeting** and the Chairman agreed to look out quotes for a metal one - **Action Clerk and Chairman**. T Smith had a meeting arranged to consider thinning out trees in Royston Wood. The management of the wood was explained to T Smith and it was suggested he involves the Babergh representative in discussions. The Clerk forwarded an email with contact details to both T Smith as Tree Warden and D Kingham for the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS : T Smith has investigated Community Speedwatch and now all the equipment is supplied by Suffolk Police, so there is no cost to reserve. We just need 6 volunteers and once Covid settles, full training can be provided. T Smith will seek volunteers and D Kingham agreed to help with the Facebook page. Digging has been observed at the Golf Club in respect of a provisional wedding venue and a sound test was planned. Harrow Street and Plough Lane are now on the list to be designated Quiet Lanes and C Morgan was thanked for her work in this respect.

The meeting closed at **9.16 p.m.**

Planning Meeting on 20th January 2021

The following decision was advised from the Planning Authority: -

Planning Permission had been granted for a single storey rear conservatory at 44 Wrights Way - **DC/20/05101**

The following was discussed: -

Any other Urgent Planning items: Residents remain concerned about the former Lion site. It was noted the Parish Council has responded to the applicants and have no control over this development site. L Parker agreed it was unsatisfactory to be left in the state it is and he will chase again from the District Council.