



# PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

## LAXFIELD ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday 19 May 2025 at 6 00 pm in the Village Hall

[www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk](http://www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk)

Peter Lowe, Parish Clerk

### OPEN FORUM

Six members of the public attended the meeting.

David Leng from the Community Market team provided information on proposals for the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, currently totalling £2,500. It was agreed that the information would be reviewed over the next few weeks, so a decision could be made to approve some up-front funding at the June Parish Council meeting.

One resident expressed their ongoing concern about the number and type of bollards installed around the junction – and that this was a listed structure that needed planning permission. They also asked about the costs of the works, which was £6,800. It was agreed that this could be discussed later in the agenda.

S Innes confirmed that she would be standing down as the both the chair of the Parish Council and as a parish councillor, after the ACPM.

### MINUTES

- R Sutton was elected Parish Council Chair.** Proposed D Martindale, seconded S Sutton, AIF.
- O Hackett was elected Vice Chair.** Proposed P Bicheno, seconded L Sharman, AIF.
- The following committee chairs and group representatives were elected:**

NAME OF OFFICE	NAME	PROPOSED	SECONDED
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>a PLANNING CHAIR</b>	R Sutton	D Martindale	S Innes
Nominated member	D Alchin	D Martindale	L Sharman
Nominated member	D Martindale	L Sharman	S Sutton
Nominated member	S Ellis	R Sutton	S Innes
<b>GROUPS COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>b GROUPS COMMITTEE CHAIR</b>	O Hackett	R Sutton	L Sharman
Nominated member	L Sharman	P Bicheno	S Sutton
Nominated member	S Sutton	S Innes	D Martindale
Nominated member	S Ellis (play area)	L Sharman	D Alchin
<b>FINANCE COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>c FINANCE CHAIR</b>	D Martindale	S Innes	S Sutton
Nominated member	L Sharman	O Hackett	S Ellis
Nominated member	R Sutton	S Innes	D Martindale
Nominated member	P Bicheno	R Sutton	D Alchin
<b>REPRESENTATIVES OF PARISH GROUPS</b>			
<b>d REPRESENTATIVES</b>			
I. Village Hall Council	S Sutton	S Innes	R Sutton
Village Hall Council	R Smith	L Sharman	S Sutton
Smith & Ward Charity	S Sutton	S Innes	S Ellis
II. Relief in Need Charity	S Sutton	R Smith	L Sharman
III. Laxfield & District Museum	R Smith	R Sutton	S Ellis
IV. SALC & county area committees	D Alchin	S Sutton	D Martindale

4. **Attendees:** D Alchin, P Bicheno, S Ellis, S Innes (Chair), D Martindale, L Sharman, H Scorey, R Smith, R Sutton, S Sutton, P Lowe (Clerk). O Hackett attended part of the meeting.
5. **Apologies and approval of absences**  
None.
6. **Declaration of interests**  
R Sutton.
7. **Declaration of acceptance of office**  
The chair and vice chair have signed their declaration of office forms in the presence of the clerk.
8. **Register of interests**  
None at the meeting. However, five councillors are to sign ROIs for submission to MSDC before the next meeting.
9. **Membership**  
A new vacancy for parish councillor has arisen, because of S Innes stepping down. Agreement that a short period should be allowed to advertise the vacancy to parish residents, with a view to reaching the full complement of 11 parish councillors. Clerk to publish a '*notice of vacancy*' for the mandatory period on the Parish notice board and website.
10. **Approval of minutes**
  - a. 25/05/01 The minutes from Parish Council meeting held on 8 April 2024 were agreed. Proposed R Sutton, seconded S Clarke, AIF.

#### 11. Planning

##### a. The following decisions made by Mid Suffolk District Council were noted:

**PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED DC/25/01077** (*No objections*)

**Proposal & Location of Development:** Householder planning consent application for installation of a dropped kerb to front of property.

**Location:** 49 Framlingham Road Laxfield Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 8HD

**PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED DC/25/01870** (*No objections*)

**Proposal & Location of Development:** Construction of a new classroom facility with external undercover deck area at Laxfield Pre School Group.

**Location:** Laxfield Pre School Group, Framlingham Road, Laxfield, Suffolk, IP13 8DH

**PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED DC/25/01214** (*No objections*)

**Proposal & Location of Development:** Householder planning consent application for the erection of a single storey pitched roof extension to the side elevation (following demolition of conservatory).

**Location:** Wheatside Rowes Hill, Laxfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 8HZ.

**PLANNING PERMISSION UNDER CONSIDERATION DC/25/01214** (*No objections*)

**Proposal & Location of Development:** Householder planning consent application for installation of Ground Mounted Solar Panels on rear garden.

**Location:** 5 Bickers Hill Road, Laxfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 8EZ.

**DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS APPLICATION DC/21/05042**

Conditions 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) and 11 (Construction Management Plan) for land At Sunnyside Barn, Gorams Mill Lane, Laxfield. It was agreed that this can be suitably discharged through the information provided within Drawing No. 051 'Construction Management Plan'

##### b. The following comments submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council were noted:

**DEVELOPMENT BY STATUTORY UNDERTAKER DC/25/02025/01245/01241/01245**

- a. Connexin are planning to erect four 12m telegraph poles in different locations across Laxfield village. The poles will house IoT (Internet of Things) devices, designed to monitor and manage critical functions such

as energy usage, traffic flow, environmental conditions to create a smarter, more connected community. They will be installed at the following locations:

- Outside 23 Mill Road and opposite 44 Mill Road
- Land at the bottom 5 Bickers Hill Road Laxfield
- Main High Street grass verge, just up from the Guildhall

The Parish Council has expressed concerns to Connexin regarding the height and general appearance of some of the telegraph poles. In particular, the one on High Street, which is planned to be erected in the middle of the village conservation area - and another on Bickers Hill Road, which is to be installed at the bottom of a resident's garden. Requested that these be relocated to areas that have little or no impact on the village street scene, or on residential households.

- Blacksmiths Way development:* Cllr Andres Linder and the clerk discussed ongoing discussions between SCC Highways and Denbury Homes about widening and improving the path surface of the Mill Close connecting footpath. This now requires action from SCC on funding and undertaking the works, as they control the land ownership of an extended Council residential garden that blocks the path route.
- Bickers Hill planning enforcement:* The Parish Council is working closely with MSDC to ensure all enforcement issues on Bickers Hill are considered and concluded within the enforcement timeframe.

## **12. Finance**

- 25/05/02 BACs payments, direct debits and receipts as listed in Register of Payments for April 2025 were agreed. Proposed S Innes, seconded R Sutton, AIF.
- 25/05/03 Bank reconciliations for April 2025 were reviewed and agreed. Proposed S Sutton, seconded D Martindale, AIF.
- 25/05/04 Performance v budget and monthly accounts for April 2025 were reviewed and noted.
- 25/05/05 The healthy balance of general reserves was noted. The clerk commented that a significant amount of these reserves are already earmarked and it was crucial that estimated potential costs of all planned actions were calculated over the coming months, as a prioritisation exercise may be needed based on alignment with the Neighbourhood Plan and/or critical works.

## **13. Audit**

25/05/06 Noted that the annual audit return (AGAR) has been successfully completed and signed off and included the Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement, Statement of Accounts and the External Auditors Report. The AGAR was placed on the Parish Council notice board and is also available to view on the Parish Council website. The chair has signed the documentation as appropriate.

## **14. Neighbourhood Plan**

25/05/07 Parish Council had a stall at the Community Market on 3rd May to introduce the new Laxfield Design Guide and provide a platform for general resident feedback. There was good engagement on the proposals throughout the morning, including questions from people outside the Parish. Concerns about speeding in the village was also raised by a number of residents, with ideas on traffic calming on the main high street. Agreed that we will now hold 2 stalls per year at the Community Market (May and September) to help stimulate engagement and provide a platform to consult on any key parish developments.

## **15. Roads, Footpaths, Infrastructure, Green Areas**

- 25/05/08 To discuss highways and green spaces issues including:
  - Church Walk/Villas footpath bio-diversity survey and maintenance* - RS sent a letter to households along Church Walk/Villas, prior to the survey work starting. The survey has now been completed and will be published on the Parish Council website. Work on cutting back and planting will start once the nesting season is over.
  - Safety barrier and repairs to damaged bridge at bottom of Church Walk* – complaints have been made about the bright plastic barriers on the bridge, which have been there for some time. SCC Highways have been approached to ask if the barrier can be removed or replaced with something better. Unfortunately, neither are possible at present and we need to wait for this repair to reach the top of their priority list.
  - PROW (Public Rights of Way) maintenance tools* - agreed to purchase a number of heavy duty and battery-operated tools and recharging units, at a cost of £3,800. Parish Clerk will contact SSC to confirm

that they will provide funds. None of tools require a license to operate, which is crucial, given that the PROW maintenance work is often done by volunteers. Two locations have been identified to store the tools safely and allow recharging.

- iv. *Dog litter bins* – the new large dog litter bin has arrived, and this will be installed at the bottom of Church Walk/Goram Mill Lane. Currently examining options for where the bin would be best placed in terms of using existing street structures or fitting a new post.
- v. to note that progress updates on BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) will be given at working group meetings
- vi. to note further meeting with Sustrans on developing parish cycle paths/routes will take place at end of May.
- b. 25/05/09 *Tank pond conveyancing* – Recent plans to transfer the ownership of the land that the tank pond sits in, over to the Parish Council, has been paused indefinitely due to the owner now not wanting to sell. Therefore, any future improvements to the pond have been paused indefinitely, until the situation changes.
- c. 25/05/10 *Village pond safety* – there are concerns that children regularly go fishing and play around the pond and are often unaccompanied by adults. If they were to fall in, it would be very hard for them to get out, due to the depth, steep sides and high amounts of silt at the bottom of the pond. The Parish Council will work with MSDC to carry out a risk assessment, prior to putting up a new safety sign and carrying out a formal communication to children and parents, via local schools.
- d. 25/05/11 *New playground safety* – there have been a small number of incidents of children getting hit by the gate at the bottom of the playground, mainly due to the spring back mechanism being too fast. SE agreed to speak to the contractors to get this adjusted and add protective foam to the top of the gate.
- e. 25/05/12 *Speeding in village* – SCC Highways have now provided documents showing a planned extended 30mph zone at the top of Bickers Hill. Three new gateway signs are also planned at key points coming into, and out of the village (which include 30mph circular signs). The costs of this work will be reviewed at the next meeting, and they should be installed sometime over the summer. Both village *Speed Indicator Devices* (SIDs) are now working again after batteries were replaced.

## 16. Correspondence and other issues

- f. 25/05/13 *Update on cemetery improvements* - the new cemetery needs a tap for visitors wanting to tend graves and to support the maintenance work. A water butt is currently used. Anglian Water have a mains connection directly outside the new cemetery gates and an initial assessment quoted £5,500 to install a new tap. The Parish Council have provisionally agreed to fund this but want to review the total costs of other improvements planned for the cemetery, including a new footbridge, footpath and garden of contemplation. The combined costings will be presented at the June meeting.
- g. 25/05/14 *Pollution in Blyth River by Anglian Water* - The Parish Council has been provided with data regarding about high levels of pollutants and excessive sewage overflows into our local river Blyth, via the Laxfield sewage treatment station. Some initial analysis work has been done showing a 17% increase in sewage overflow incidents in 2024 compared to the previous year. The Parish Council will now monitor overflows on a regular basis – with updates reported quarterly at Parish Council meetings.
- h. 25/05/15 *Second defibrillator for village* – OH to provide pictures of possible locations for installation to the next meeting.
- i. 25/05/16 To note dates agreed for the scrap collection, 28/29 June and 5/6 July 2025.
- 24/05/17 *Feedback on war memorial junction works* – discussed later at the APM.
- j. 24/05/18 *E-scooters* - complaints have been received from residents about young people riding E-scooters on the road and pavements in Laxfield (in particular, high street and Bickers Hill). A Police incident report has been submitted, and the matter has been referred to Suffolk Community Policing team.

## 17. Date of next meeting

- a. The date of the next meeting is Monday 9 June 2025 at 7:00 pm in the **PARISH ROOM**.

Meeting finished at 7:20 pm

If you would like to attend a parish council meeting, please come along. Alternatively, if you would like to raise a matter of concern, please do not hesitate to contact the parish clerk or a member of the council.

**Peter Lowe (Parish Clerk), 21 Talbot Road, Laxfield, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 8FP**

**Tel: 07711 822503 Email: [parishclerk@laxfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@laxfield-pc.gov.uk) Visit our Website: [www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk](http://www.laxfield-pc.gov.uk)**