

Lode Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 9 March 2015

These minutes comprise 4 pages.

- Present** Cllrs C Rickard (Chairman), P Dean, P Lane, E Mitchell, F Platten, A Tomlinson and S Woolley.
C/Cllr M Shuter (after 8pm), D/Cllr R Stevens, Mr M Lord (NHW), Mr T Cassidy (Internal Auditor), Mr C Platten (Tree Officer/Social Club) and 6 members of the public.
- Apologies** Mr M Bradshaw (NT)
- 17/15 Minutes** The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9 February 2015 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- Declaration of Interest**
- (a) Prejudicial** There were none.
(b) Other There were none.
- 18/15 Matters Arising** The Clerk reported that:-
- the weight of electrical materials collected in January was 3503kg which gives a total of 8424kg for the year. This second collection raised £133.84 for Parish funds.
 - He had supplied Mr Lamb with the cost of Fassage Hall electricity but to make it more meaningful he intended supplying copies of the invoices.
 - Highways had advised that new 'Dangerous Bend' and a 'Go Slow' signs will replace the damaged one at Shrub Corner.
 - The poor condition of the verge at the crossroads bus stop had been reported to Highways. D/Cllr Stevens said that he had also raised the matter.
 - With reference to the bollards at Shrub Corner it was agreed that the temporary posts seem to be keeping vehicles off the grass. Some Cllrs thought that the temporary posts were good enough to form a permanent solution.
- Cllr Mitchell reported that due to ill health she had not been able to discuss the provision of a village web site with Mr Middleton. The Clerk reminded councillors of the ECDC email on this topic which could form a good starting point for discussion.
- 19/15 C/Council Report** C/Cllr Shuter reported that:-
- It had been necessary to increase the County's portion of the Council Tax by 1.99% for the coming year. In future years, if the current level of tax is maintained, it will be necessary to cut front line services.
 - Together with Cllr Platten he is to attend a meeting at the County Council at which the question of Government funding for the Lode to Quy cycle way will be discussed. He will speak forcefully in favour of the project.
- 20/15 D/Council Report** D/Cllr Stevens reported that:-
- the planning approval for the use of the paddock for parking had been extinguished when the overflow car park was completed. If the NT wishes to use the paddock in the future a new application must be submitted.
 - There has been no increase in the ECDC portion of the Council Tax.
 - The roads within Lode and Longmeadow are not included on the gritting maps.

21/15 Parish Council Reports

Finance

Invoices

The Council agreed that the following payments could be made electronically.
Last month's payments were checked and signed off.

Clerk	Salary	289.25	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Clerk	PAYE	72.31	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Clerk	Stationery	16.45	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Mr R Dean	Cemetery Maintenance	169.02	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Green Energy	Fassage Hall Electricity	342.11	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Halls	Fassage Hall Locks	450.44	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Anglian Water	Cemetery Water Rate	26.88	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Truelink	Grass Cutting August PC not invoiced at time of cutting	455.10	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10

Planning

The results of following applications were received:-

Mr C Purbrook Gallys Farm	15/00172OUT Erection of rural worker dwelling with ancillary outbuildings
Mr and Mrs D Stackhouse 39 Mill Road	15/00014/FUL Amendment to plan. Proposed SE Elevation reduced from 5 windows to 3. Height reduced. No reason for the PC to comment.

With reference to the Gally's Farm application, Mr Purbrook was present at the meeting and identified himself during the discussion of his planning application. He provided the following answers to questions raised by Councillors:-

- The remote location of the proposed house was chosen as it would give the best location for keeping an eye on the land and livestock.
- Despite the remote location, Mr Purbrook assured the PC that there would be no need for a surfaced access way from the Fen Road – he would simply drive across the field.
- He did not think that the house would have an adverse impact on the NT's wild camping site.
- The business plan in support of the provision of a dwelling is lodged with ECDC. It is confidential.
- He has owned the farm for some 7 years and uses it for breeding horses and sheep.

At the end of the meeting Mr Purbrook expressed concern that the PC would be putting its response together in a separate meeting that he would not be able to attend. Cllr Rickard responded saying that the matter had been aired in his presence and the PC's views had been made clear and he had been given the opportunity to address the PC's concerns. The PC would formulate its response on this basis.

Allotments

Cllr Tomlinson reported that: rent invoices will be sent out towards the end of the month for payment in the new financial year.

Cemetery

Cllr Tomlinson reported that the area was extremely tidy following the litter pick. In discussion of this item it was agreed that a note which identified the rules governing floral, especially plastic tributes, should be drafted.

Fassage Hall

Mr Lamb reported that:-

- New blinds have been installed and other maintenance work is progressing.
- The purchase of a defibrillator will be considered at the April meeting.
- The AGM of the Hall will be held immediately before the June Parish Council meeting.

Street Lighting

Being aware that a member of the public had raised concerns about the handling of the street lighting project, Cllr Rickard reported that:-

The lighting policy has been decided by the County Council as the responsible authority. The plan is being implemented by Balfour Beatty on behalf of the CC. As part of the rationalisation process, the number of street lights across the county is being reduced by 10% (the new lamps give an improved level of illumination). The percentage is greater in rural areas. The number of lamps to be lost in Lode has been determined at 13. The PC does not have the resources to get lights reinstated but, if there is a strong case for any particular lamp to be retained, the PC would present the case to the CC.

A representative from Balfour Beatty had attended an earlier PC meeting and listened to the concerns expressed by members of the public. Some changes to the proposed plans were suggested at this meeting. However, unless it can be demonstrated that the loss of 13 lamps in Lode is excessive, the reinstatement of a lamp in one location would necessarily involve the loss of a lamp elsewhere in the village.

C/Cllr Shuter agreed that this was an accurate summation and commented further:-

- The lighting policy had been developed, over a five year period, by the CCC to improve street lighting throughout the county and to save money. The contract for the work has been let as a PFI contract.
- There is a statutory requirement to provide lighting along transport routes but not in rural areas.
- Some counties have a policy of switching off lights after a certain time (e.g. midnight) but CCC did not favour this policy at present.
- However, the new lights will dim after 10pm, reducing the energy use by 40%.

There was a heated discussion on the lighting with particular reference to Fairhaven Close where a street light opposite the garages has been removed. It was suggested that the process of its removal was illegal. C/Cllr Shuter assured the complainant that there was no legal requirement for street lighting in such areas. After discussion it was agreed that:-

- When the project is complete the allocation of lighting within the village will be reviewed and if a meaningful case for any alteration can be made an approach will be made to the County Council.
- The Clerk should write to Sanctuary Housing asking if they can install security lighting in the garage area in Fairhaven Close.

22/15 Parish Reports

- N’hood Watch** Mr Lord reported that PCSO Ian Hawkins has been transferred to Soham and has been replaced by PCSO Maria Robinson (nee Green)
- Social Club** It had been agreed at the AGM that the funds generated by the sale of the building should be used to establish charitable status for the club. This must be completed within one year.
- Cycle Way** Cllr Platten reported that she had been advised to progress negotiations with landowners as funding for the project now seems likely.
- Litter** .Cllr Platten reported that:-
- concern had been expressed about the amount of litter along the Bottisham section of Lode Road in the vicinity of the Fairhaven stone works. The Clerk was instructed to investigate this latter problem.
 - NT staff will collect litter along its B1102 boundary.

23/15 Other Items noted.

Neighbourhood Planning	It was agreed that Cllrs Rickard and Mitchell should represent the PC at the April Conference.
Election	The Clerk distributed copies of the Nomination Pack and advised that he would supply any required electoral numbers.

24/15 There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 9.00pm.

Date of Next Council Meeting – Monday 13 April 2015

..... **Signed by the Chairman Cllr C Rickard**