

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

These minutes comprise 4 pages plus 2 pages in Appendix A

Present: Cllrs C Rickard (Chairman), P Dean, P Lane, E Mitchell and F Platten. together with Mr M Lord (NHW), Mr R Stephens (Ex-ECDC).
Mrs A Forecast (NT) and Mrs C Arnold (Post Office) both attended the first part of the meeting only.

Apologies: These were offered by Cllrs Rolland and McNeely. Mrs McNeely is leaving the village to find affordable housing and has tendered her resignation. The Clerk was instructed to set in motion the co-option process.

33/15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 October 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

33/15 Matters Arising

The Clerk reported that:-

- He had emailed Wiser Recycling requesting a collection date early in the New Year. He awaited a response.
- He had spoken to the Hereward housing manager and a site visit had taken place. He awaited an update.
- He had spoken to ECDC about the proposed location of the Church Walk sign. ECDC advised that the sign they had prepared was not suitable for this location. A new sign will be fabricated and installed in the near future.
- Allotment advertisements had been placed in the Lode Star and Bottisham Cressett.
- The vegetation encroaching onto the Fassage Hall footpath had been trimmed back.

34/15 C/Council Report

In the absence of C/Cllr Shuter there was nothing to report.

35/15 District Council

In the absence of both D/Cllr Campbell and D/Cllr Chaplin there was nothing to report. It was noted that the promise to provide a written report had not been fulfilled.

36/15 Parish Council Reports

Finance

The Clerk reported that the proposed budget had been fully discussed by the Finance sub-committee. In the course of the discussions it had been noted that there was a mismatch between the projected end-of-year balances. As this did not affect the budget it was agreed that Cllr Dean should review the figures. It was agreed that the sub-committee should recommend that the precept should be maintained at £14000. The Clerk was instructed to convey this information to ECDC. (A copy of the minutes is attached below).

Invoices

The Council agreed that the following payments could be made.

Clerk	Salary	295.61	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Clerk	PAYE	73.90	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Green Energy	Fassage Hall Electricity	207.80	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Truelink	Grass Cutting	233.70	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery (May)	144.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
W Jaggard	Play Area Gate	40.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
W Jaggard	Petrol	9.25	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
En Tout Cas	Tennis Court Resurfacing	16391.20	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
PR&D Dean	Mower Repair	155.32	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Suffolk ACRE	Additional Insurance	29.14	Local Govt Act 1972 s112

Last month's payments were checked and signed off.

Planning

The following applications were discussed

Mr C Purbrook Lug Fen Drove	15/01247/AGN A rectangular steel framed agricultural barn-like structure	See comment below
James MacSwiney Saddleduck Farm, Lug Fen Drove	15/00681/FUM Erection of equestrian facility including stables, barns and equestrian workers dwelling.	ECDC Approved

Mr C Purbrook Lug Fen Drove. In discussion of this item it was noted that there is already a barn located at the entrance to the farm and that the new structure would be built close to the National Trust's Wild Camping site. The proposed location is also close to the site of the proposed new house previously rejected by ECDC. As there is no information relating to the proposed use of the building Cllr Rickard is to investigate further.

Cllr Rickard drew attention to the response he had received from ECDC regarding the planning process as applied to Anglesey Farm. Penelope Mills (ECDC Senior Planning Officer) explained in the letter that the principal reason for the previous refusal had been concern about the financial viability of the business. Furthermore, since the last application was determined the Local Plan has been adopted and housing policy has changed. She believes that the reason for refusal has now been overcome.

Cemetery

Cllr Mitchell reported that the cemetery continues to be well maintained.

Fassage Hall

It was noted that a management committee meeting will be held shortly. The agenda will include items on power consumption and lighting about which concerns have been raised by the Parish Council.

Footpaths/Roads

Cllr Platten reported that Mr Shrubbs had supplied two loads of road planings and together with Mr Platten and Cllr Rickard had placed and compacted these in the potholes in the access road from the cemetery to the Fassage Hall.

Mr Lord reported that the NT trees bordering the path leading from the mill were in need of trimming back. These trees have grown significantly since being planted and now cast a lot of shade on the footpath and adjacent gardens. It was agreed that the National Trust should be approached to see what could be done.

It was noted that one of the traffic lights at the pedestrian crossing at the crossroads has been damaged and no longer shines in the correct direction. The Clerk was instructed to report this to Highways.

The footpath through the Anglesey Abbey car park was discussed. There is a need for improved signage so that walkers know where to go.

Play Area

Cllr Platten reported that:-

- The problems relating to the slide had been resolved by Cllr Rickard and Mr Stephens.
- The filling of the gaps in the rubber safety matting was in hand.
- Will Jaggard had done an excellent job of repairing the entrance gate post

Bins

Cllr Rickard reported that the bin by the play area had been relocated by persons unknown. He had not uncovered any information about the disappearance of the bin at the crossroads bus shelter. It was agreed that Cllr Dean would speak to the landowner and Cllr Lane should visit the site. Mr Stephens reported that he had cleared a large amount of rubbish from the vicinity of the bus shelter, including several very large items. The need for a bin at the bus shelter was discussed. It was suggested that the lack of a bin might actually reduce littering.

37/15 Parish Reports

Anglesey Abbey

Mrs Forecast reported that:-

- She would send the bus shelter lease documents to the Clerk. It was thought that the Sunray lease was for the shed located behind Fassage Hall and did not affect the PC.
- The winter lights are now in place and all tickets have been sold. This year there are several parties arriving by coach.
- The County together with the NT had carried out a safety audit on the proposed cycle path in the vicinity of Anglesey Abbey.
- Abbey staff continue to be exceedingly busy but there was little to report to the PC.

Cycle Way

Cllr Platten reported that:-

- Mr Watts (Quy PC) had emailed to say that Quy PC had discussed the project. They are investigating the costs of maintaining the hedge up to the boundary with Lode Parish. They would prefer to fill in the gaps in the existing hedge in order to isolate the cycle path from the highway. In discussion of this item it was reported that some users of the cycle path would prefer a more open aspect (with less hedging) and others like the idea of a continuous barrier between the road and the path. It was agreed to await further news from Quy.
- If Quy is prepared to maintain its section then Lode PC should give serious consideration to the need for maintenance of its section. Once we have some idea of likely costs the issue can be discussed in more detail.

Village Sign

Cllr Mitchell reported that work on the repainting of the sign was ongoing and the sign should hopefully be in place by the end of the year.

Footpath through Anglesey Abbey car park

Mr Stevens raised concerns about the signing of the footpath through the Abbey car park. As this was item discussed after Mrs Forecast had left the meeting, Cllr Platten agreed to raise the subject with her in the New Year.

ECDC Conference

Cllr Mitchell reported that she had attended the conference for two hours and had found it useful, in particular the opportunity to meet cllrs from other parishes.

Post Office

Mrs Arnold opened her presentation by thanking the village for its support of the Post Office. She reported that:-

- The updating of the serving counter had been completed successfully.
- She is now looking to improve accessibility into the Post Office by constructing a ramp for wheelchair use. Pioneer Construction has prepared a sketch plan for a proposed 10 cm high ramp immediately in front of a widened entrance door. The work would cost about £1000. Mrs Arnold is investigating funding opportunities and asked if the Parish Council would offer its support.
- She has been advised by Highways Authority that the proposed works would be acceptable.

In discussion of this item the following comments were noted:-

- It would be sensible to approach ECDC for further advice on planning and potential sources of funding.
- There was some concern about the technical aspects of the proposed ramp, but if the works have the approval of the responsible authority there would seem to be no cause for concern.
- In considering financial support the PC has to take into account that the Post Office is a private business. However, it was made clear that it is also a vital community facility which is greatly appreciated in the village and improving access for the disabled should be supported by the PC.

Mrs Arnold was given an assurance that she had the support of the PC for this worthwhile project.

38/15 There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 9.05pm.

Date of Next Council Meeting – Monday 7th December 2015.

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

APPENDIX A

Lode Parish Council Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee held at 7.30pm on Monday 26 October 2015.

These minutes comprise 2 pages

Cllrs P Dean (Chairman), C Rickard, P Lane, Mr T Cassidy (Internal Audit) and Mr A D Tomlinson (Responsible Finance Officer - RFO).

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27 October 2014 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interest Cllr Dean reported that as his son carried out the duties of Cemetery Caretaker when a repair to the mower was carried out he would take no part in the discussion of that item.

The RFO reported that:-

Salaries

The Clerk's salary had been based upon the National Clerks' LC 1 Salary Scale at Point 27. The Cemetery Caretaker's payment had been increased by 2.5%.

Business Rate

As ECDC writes off the business rate levied on the cemetery no provision had been required for the 2015/2016 financial year.

Lighting

The Abbey Lane street light belongs to the Parish and therefore attracts charges for maintenance and electricity costs.

Lode Star

In line with regular practice a 137 grant of £200, as agreed by the full Council, will be made towards the publication of the Lode Star.

Insurance

The 5 year agreement with Suffolk ACRE expires 31 March 2016. As the ACRE administrator is unable, at this stage, to identify how this will affect the premium, a 10% mark up has been applied. The goalposts and defibrillator were not included on the schedule. This has been corrected and has attracted a payment of £29.14 to cover the remaining 6 months of the year.

Tennis Court

The cost of the resurfacing project will be £18000 which has to be paid upon completion. An HMRC VAT refund of £3000, an ECDC grant of £2996.98, a loan of £3000 and Tennis Club funding of £9003.02 will cover the cost. The Chairman of the Club has advised that a he is hopeful of a grant of £9000 from Amey.

Spares

Before the new caretaker took responsibility for the cemetery it was necessary to replace the fuel tank on the mower. This attracted a cost of £155.32..

Budget Discussion.

Cllrs examined each sub head and made the following comments:-

- The projected amount brought forward from the 2015/2016 did not agree with that recorded in the budget for the 2016/2017 financial year. After discussion of this item it was agreed that Cllr Dean should examine the figures so that he could supply a

solution to the conundrum. (Subsequently it was identified that a cheque of £7000, a donation from the tennis club, had not been cleared when the budget was being developed).

- If the electricity charges for Fassage Hall are to be controlled it will be necessary for certain electrical improvements to be carried out. Cllr Rickard will contact Mr Lamb on this matter.
- The expected VAT reclaim on the electricity invoices appeared to be inflated. In answer to the RFO' comment that 20% had been used Cllr Dean identified that different rates are charged at varying levels of cost.

It was agreed that an unchanged precept of £14000 should be recommended to the November meeting of the full PC.

Discussion then turned to the probable need to ring fence funds to cover any identifiable projects such as any work required on the cycle way, the resurfacing of Cemetery Road or the track leading from the car park to Fassage Hall. A decision of the full PC will be required.

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 8.20pm.