

Lode Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 14 March 2016

These minutes comprise 4 pages.

Present: Cllrs C Rickard (Chairman), P Dean, P Lane, E Mitchell, F Platten and R Stevens, D/Cllr A Sharp, Mr M Lord (NHW), Mr A Lamb (Fassage Hall), Mr C Platten (Social Club/Tree Officer) and Mrs A Knockton.

Apologies: D/Cllr D Chaplin, Cllr R Small, Mr T Cassidy, Mrs A Forecast.

33/15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 February 2016 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Declaration of Interest

- (a) **Prejudicial** – Cllr Lane declared an interest in the planning application submitted by the owner of 66 Lode Road.
- (b) **Other** – there were none

33/15 Matters Arising

The Clerk reported that:-

- The Church Walk sign had been relocated to a more suitable position.
- He had applied for a grant to cover the cost of the computer equipment required by the Transparency Code and had identified the most suitable items. He was authorised to proceed with the purchase.

Cllr Mitchell reported that:-

- The Lode Star report concerning the cemetery seat would be included in the April publication.
- The Parish Conference had proven to be most useful. The new Local Plan was the focal point of the discussion and her belief is that if the PC is to influence development within the village in the future, a Neighbourhood Plan should be developed. It was agreed that Councillors should bring their ideas on the way forward to the April meeting. The draft ECDC Local Plan is due to be published in July.

34/15 C/Council Report

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

35/15 District Council

D/Cllr Sharp reported that:-

- The ECDC element of the Council Tax bill had been frozen for the third year in a row.
- He had been appointed to the Regulatory and Support Services Committee and the Licensing Committee.
- As the grant from Central Government had been greater than expected plans were being into place to distribute this excess to 42 of the smaller villages. This should not be added to the precept but used for some worthwhile project. D/Cllr Sharp could not confirm the sum involved, but a figure of £2900 was mentioned.

36/15 Parish Council Reports

Finance - Invoices

The Council agreed that the following payments could be made.

Last month's payments were checked and signed off.

Clerk	Salary	295.61	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Clerk	PAYE	73.90	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Green Energy	Fassage Hall Electricity	255.63	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery	144.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Truelink	Field aeration, hedge cut and one field cut	715.20	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
CPRE	Subscription	36.00	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Anglian Water	Cemetery Water Rate	21.62	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
B Vincent	Fassage Hall Maintenance	1056.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Rates	Cemetery	0.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10

It was noted that the PC receives 100% discount on the cemetery rates charge.

Planning The following applications were discussed

Mr and Mrs T Hartley 66 Lode Road	16/00157/FUL Demolition of sun lounge. Two storey rear extension, first floor extension, internal alterations plus external and new side dormers.
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In discussion of this item it was noted that the PC does not normally comment on applications for extensions unless the impact on the village is significant, or the proposal is considered to constitute overdevelopment of the plot. However, Cllr Platten expressed concern about the extent to which the proposed extension overlooked neighbouring properties. Cllr Stevens suggested that the PC could ask the planning officers to take account of any concerns expressed by the neighbouring property owners. Cllr Rickard agreed to draft a response from the PC along these lines.

Mr C Purbrook Gally's Farm	15/01559/OUT Erection of rural worker dwelling with ancillary outbuildings.
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Cllr Rickard reported that the main concern expressed by the PC was the unfettered development on the Fen. In the case of Gally's farm he had been advised by D/Cllr Chaplin that the planning officers were minded to refuse the application. This being the case he did not think it was necessary to ask D/Cllr Chaplin to "call in" the application (i.e. to ask for it to be considered by the full planning committee). Cllr Rickard will check with the planning officer to make sure that they are still intending to refuse the application.

Allotments

The Clerk reported that rent invoices would be distributed in the week commencing 21 March.

Cemetery

Cllr Stevens reported that he had arranged for the cutting back of the encroaching vegetation in Cemetery Road.

Fassage Hall

Mr Lamb reported that:-

- After a lengthy lead time the heat pump had been repaired. In the process a problem with pressure loss in the under-floor heating system had been identified. This was traced to a faulty pressure release valve which has now been fixed.
- A new water boiler will be installed within 3 to 4 weeks. At that time blenders will be installed to ensure that tap water is not excessively hot.
- The septic tank blower will be re-programmed to operate between 12 midnight and 6am rather than the recommended 24/7 in order to reduce energy costs.

It was agreed to wait to see if these changes had a noticeable impact on energy costs before deciding if further investigation of electricity consumption should be undertaken.

Cllr Rickard reported that he had recently sent an email to John Lince who had taken over chairmanship of the Fassage Hall Management Committee from Mr Lamb. This thanked the FHMC for their work as volunteers and confirmed that day-to-day running of the hall would remain with the committee but that any major expenses and decisions should be referred to the PC. Unfortunately his email had been misconstrued and caused some concern. Cllr Rickard had apologised for any misunderstanding and confirmed that he had complete confidence in the FHMC.

Cllr Stevens reported that he had removed one of the broken solar lights along the access road and repaired another. There are now six lamps rather than seven. Mr Lamb thought that he might have a spare lantern or part thereof. He will investigate.

Cllr Stevens noted that, at a recent event, he had observed a number of cars parked outside the hall in the area reserved for disabled persons. As the planning approval only allows for parking in this area by two disabled drivers, indiscriminate parking should be discouraged. Mr Lamb confirmed that he has suitable signage awaiting installation.

Bus Shelters

Cllr Stevens reported that he had cleared the ivy from around the bus shelters on the High Street and at Longmeadow.

Street Lighting

Cllr Stevens reported that he had touched up the paintwork on the black streetlight poles.

Bins

Cllr Stevens reported that he had concluded that the missing bin at the crossroads bus shelter had been stolen. In discussion of this item it was agreed that it was not necessary to replace the bin as the litter problem seemed to be under control.

Seats

Cllr Stevens reported that he had made a temporary repair to the seat on the corner of Station Road and Cemetery Road.

37/15 Parish Reports

Anglesey Abbey

Cllr Platten reported that the liaison committee would meet on Monday 21 March.

Items for discussion include:-

- The need for footpath signage within the Abbey car park
- A request for tree chippings for use on the footpath from the Mil to the allotments
- A sign advising pedestrians that it is not possible to access the Abbey along the footpath which runs by the side of 68 Lode Road.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr Lord reported that the PCSO presence in the region had been reduced to one officer. To make life easier she has been given a tablet on which she can record her reports without a need to return to the station at Ely.

In response to an email submitted by a resident, Mrs Payne, it was agreed that two speed watch operations would be carried out, one on Lode Road and the other Station Road.

Social Club

Cllr Mitchell reported that she had discussed management of the charity with the trustees with regard to appointing trustees in the future, with the following conclusions:

- Trustees should be sought from a wide range of possible candidates.
- Trustees would be appointed for a three year period of office with at least one retiring at the end of that period. The first period will commence one year after the charitable status is approved.
- A “role” description will be developed against which aspiring trustees would be assessed.

Sports Club

Mr Lamb reported that the last football match will be played this week and he is hopeful that the visiting team will use the field next season. To prepare the field for the cricket season he asked if cutting could commence as soon as possible after the final football match.

Cycle Way

Cllr Platten reported that:-

- The ecological survey had been carried out and had identified the need for further studies into the presence of great crested newts in the drainage ditches.
- She had assisted in the negotiations with Quy Estates for the construction site compound to be located on their land,
- It is expected that the construction work will take 20 weeks.

Jumble Sale

Cllr Platten reported that she was to hold a further jumble sale to raise funds. The proceeds will be divided between Sustrans, Mind and a future project for the village. The Clerk was instructed to establish a further ring fenced fund for the village project.

Trees

Mr Platten reported that he had applied for the free tree saplings from Sainsburys, both for the White Fen woodland and for more hedging along the B1102. He had been advised that, if his application is successful, the hedging will only cover a 30m length. He asked if the PC would fund further lengths of hedging. It was agreed to wait for the results of his bid before considering this.

38/15 There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 9.30pm.

Date of Next Council Meeting – Monday 11 April 2016.

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

These minutes comprise 4 pages