

Lode Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 11 September 2017

These minutes comprise 5 pages

Present: Cllrs R Stevens (Chairman), R Small, E Mitchell, F Platten, and I Faulkner; D/Cllr A Sharp.

55/17 Public Question Time: Mr D Durrant raised his concern that the new Cycle Path comes very close to the road at a bend on the B1102 and questioned whether some kind of barrier at that point might make it safer. He also pointed out that there is no drainage at that point which could lead to cyclists being splashed as vehicles pass. (See also update on Interactive Sign and Cycle Path below.)

56/17 Apologies: Cllr P Lane, Cllr M Walsh, D/Cllr D Chaplin

57/17 Declarations of interest : none

58/17 Minutes of meeting 10 July 2017: Signed by the chair as a correct record

59/17 Matters arising from July meeting:

- **Interactive sign:** Cllr Small proposed that the following points be raised in emphasising the importance of the sign:
 - The new cycle path will lead to increased cycle traffic at the crossroads
 - The route from Lode village through to the pavement/cycle track to Bottisham is hazardous for cyclists and pedestrians as, once users have used the light controlled crossing they then have to cross Lode Road at the corner on the Bottisham side to reach the track
 - Those travelling from Quy to Lode will also have to negotiate this crossing
 - The sign will be important in underscoring the new 30 mph limit at the crossroads when it is introduced
 - Similar signs in Bottisham appear to be effective in reducing speed
- **Thistles on the Recreation Ground:** It has not been possible to test the effectiveness of treating a small area of the ground due to the weather conditions during the summer. Mr Durrant advised that the best time to undertake the treatment would be early April and it might be something that he could undertake. The Clerk advised that the area would need to be fenced off to protect children and animals, with warning signs. Any contractor would need to hold appropriate insurance.
- **School bus to Bottisham Primary School:** Cllr Mitchell reported that 7 children from Lode are currently deemed ineligible for free transport as they live too close to the school to qualify. The County Council has insisted that it will continue to apply its policy rigidly. Cllr Mitchell is continuing her research into what the County Council said in the Open Meeting held in Lode in 1983 prior to the village school closure in 1985. Any further representation to the County Council would emphasise the divisiveness of the policy as it impacts so differently on people living within the village as well as failing to maximise the use of the transport which has available seats. Cllr Small pointed out that another factor preventing parents whose children do not qualify for free transport not choosing to pay the fares demanded by the Council was that these have increased by more than 25% in the last couple of years.

In considering how else the position of these children could be mitigated, Cllr Stevens suggested that the Lode Charity or the Parish Council could consider allocating a small pot of money which could be divided among eligible parents who apply to reduce the impact of the transport cost.

- **Replacement sundial for the cemetery:** It was agreed that the words: “Sunshine passes, shadows fall; love and memories outlast all” would be inscribed on one side of the gnomon with the words: “By the Lodestar I plot my course” on the other. The Clerk will place the order with the supplier identified by Cllr Mitchell as agreed at the July meeting.
- **Picnic Table:** Cllr Platten confirmed she would arrange for the disposal of the old dismantled picnic table
- **Dog Bin at Longmeadow:** Cllr Stevens confirmed that he had been able to refix the bin so that it was not necessary for the Council to buy a replacement.

60/17 County Council Report: none

61/17 District Council Report: D/Cllr Sharp reported that the full Council meeting in July was largely concerned with procedural matters but the meeting in October will consider the draft Local Plan which, if approved, will be sent to the Planning Inspector. Following the election of James Palmer (the previous Chair of the Council) to be mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, he resigned his district council seat which was retained by the Conservatives in a by-election. A closely fought seat in Ely was won by the Liberal Democrats replacing the Conservatives.

D/Cllr Sharp sits on three committees: Licensing, Finance & Resources, and the Shareholder Committee. The last of these is, in effect, the scrutiny committee for the Council’s Trading Company which will be taking responsibility for Waste Collections from April 2018. 62 staff will be TUPE’d back to the Council. The Company is planning to replace the vehicle fleet in 2022/23.

The Council has planned a balanced budget for the next two financial years – this will be achieved by utilising the underspend of £1.4m achieved in 2016-17, largely from Planning fee receipts well in excess of expectations.

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- **Anglesey Abbey:** The Clerk had forwarded the email from Andrew Myson, Garden & Outdoors Manager at the Abbey advising that they were going to fell a tree on the Trust’s Allotment land “due to its condition and proximity to human activity”. Council members expressed concern that once the tree had been felled, it was clear that, while one branch was diseased, the rest of the tree was healthy indicating that less radical action would have been possible. They asked to be given more opportunity to comment if any similar issue arises in future and also suggested that a new tree should be planted in its place. Given the number of issues that arise relevant to the role of Head Gardener, Council members would welcome the opportunity to meet with the newly appointed person.
- **Cycle Path:** The work is now progressing with the construction of the path. In that context, the Council considered that it would be appropriate to ask Cambridgeshire County Council to carry out a safety review of the crossroads. Mr Durrant suggested that the junction would be much safer for cyclists and pedestrians if the whole junction was light controlled, rather than just having a crossing for pedestrians on the B1102. If traffic were stopped in all four directions for pedestrians to cross this would enable them to cross diagonally if, for example, they needed to cross from the east side of Lode Road in the village to the west side when proceeding to Bottisham. These points would be relevant in connection with those raised in connection with the Interactive Sign

- **Neighbourhood Watch:** No report
- **Lode Village Trust:** Cllr Mitchell reported that the Trust had met on 21 July and is planning to run a couple of events for the village each year based on the successful pop-up Pub event in August. The Trust has also sought suggestions via Lode Star but has so far not received any responses
- **Sports Club:** Cllr Stevens reported that Burwell Mens' and Ladies' Football teams had booked the ground for the next season which generates some income for the Fassage Hall Committee. Cllr Small suggested that the Committee be asked to consider contributing to the cost of eradicating the thistles
- **Tree Officer:** The Clerk read out the following report from Liz King:
 1. I have attended a Tree Safety Seminar organised by Huntingdonshire District Council. The course was very informative and set out very clear guidelines for Tree Wardens to prepare Tree policies, zoning plans and regular tree surveys/inspection reports. The course included a practical tutorial on how to carry out tree inspections and what signs to look out for when assessing the health of trees in relation to public safety. [I shall forward the documentation from the course in a separate email to be saved in the parish council files and Rob can bring printed copies to Monday's meeting in case any of the councillors are interested in having a look through].
 2. We have arranged an orchard mowing day on Saturday 23rd September. Charlie Platten will mow the orchard and we currently have 5 volunteers who have confirmed they will come along and help rake the trimmings into a hay pile. Following this we are planning to weed out around the base of the trees in preparation for adding mulch in the spring.
 3. The Orchard Apple Pressing day is arranged for Sunday 15th October and the press is currently under construction (nearly finished!). Details will be published in the October Lode Star.
 4. During the Summer there were reports received of overhanging branches on the large willow tree on Station Road obscuring the speed restriction sign. A few branches have now been trimmed back and we will keep an eye on the tree.

Cllr Small confirmed that further volunteers would be welcome on 23 September. Cllr Platten will provide one of the sign boards used to advertise jumble sales to publicise this event.

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- **Finance:** The following payments were approved:

J E Giles	Salary + PAYE	346.35	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
TableTennisTables.co.uk to Robert Stevens	Table Tennis: 4 bats & 24 balls	49.98 +VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Anglian Water	Cemetery	106.46	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Green Energy	Fassage Hall Electricity	66.41 +VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery	147.60	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10

Truelink Ltd	Grass cutting <i>No bill yet received- approval sought pending receipt</i>	252.64 +VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Jaggard Projects	Concrete bases for new play equipment	1600+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Swaffham Internal Drainage Board	Agricultural Drainage Rates for Cemetery & Allotments	27.60	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10

The Clerk will prepare a report to show the position against budget half way through the financial year.

- **Planning**

- **17/00439/FUL Land South of Broughton Hall and 17/00440/FUL Land North of Broughton Hall.** The Clerk advised that notices of Appeal have been lodged with the Secretary of State against the decision of East Cambridgeshire Council to refuse planning permission. The Council resolved that the Clerk should make submission to the Planning Inspectorate drawing attention to their comments already submitted to ECDC and emphasising the importance of seeing the impact on the village of the two applications taken together.
- **17/01486/FUL 22 Fairhaven Close, CB25 9HG.** The Council had no comments to make on this application
- **17/01567/FUL 45 Northfields, CB25 9EU.** The Council had no comments to make on this application
- **National Trust land between the Cemetery and Recreation Ground** The Council noted that following the receipt of an email from Amanda Forecast advising that this land was designated “investment land” and as such was to be sold, an email had been received from Hastoe Housing Association wishing to explore the development of affordable housing on or adjoining this site.

Cllr Stevens pointed that Housing Associations, as affordable housing providers, can apply to develop “exception sites” outside the designated areas for development. Members reiterated their comments made in July to the effect that this site is important amenity land in the village – Cllr Platten described it as the village’s “lung”. Cllr Small said that this issue highlighted the benefit of developing a Neighbourhood Plan which would positively identify which areas were suitable for development alongside those designated for recreation. The Council is clear in its view that there is a need for more affordable housing within the village. At the same time, members felt that there was a discrepancy between the intention of the Wicken Fen Vision which sets the heritage land within a wider context including White Fen Drove, and a narrower view for the context of the Anglesey Abbey estate.

Cllr Stevens proposed that rather than seeing this parcel of land as the only available option for the development of affordable housing, the Sites Appraisal commissioned by Hastoe Housing in 2014 should be revisited. He suggested that the site accessible via Millard’s Lane could be pursued further. There may also be possibilities for developing other sites held locally by the Trust.

The Council determined that the next step was to meet with the National Trust to have a clearer view of its plans before opening discussions with Hastoe Housing Association.

- **Allotments:** Cllr Small reported that he and the Clerk had walked around the allotments in August and identified those which need improved maintenance. He has drafted letters to

those tenants as well as well one to all tenants proposing a change to the normal annual rental period which would commence in September rather than April

- **Cemetery:** Cllr Mitchell presented designs prepared by Cllr Walsh for the Garden of Remembrance which would both enhance the garden and be reasonably easy to maintain. It was agreed that the hedges bordering the cemetery, as well as those bordering the allotments and play area need to be trimmed. The Clerk will arrange for Truelink to undertake this task.
- **Footpaths:** Cllr Stevens advised that Local Highway Improvement Funding is available through the County Council with a closing date of 15 October. He suggested that the footpath round the Fassage Recreation Ground could be a candidate for funding. Cllr Stevens and the Clerk will check the conditions and, if applicable, make an application
- **Fassage Hall:** The Clerk advised that he had been approached by Emily Tydeman from the National Trust to complete the Lease for the Roller Blade Area. It was agreed that this should proceed, ascertaining whether it covers the area where the new gym equipment is situated.
- **Play Area:** Cllr Stevens was concerned that some adults were using the play equipment and has designed a notice indicating that the equipment was intended for those under the age of 13. The Clerk will contact RoSPA regarding certification of the new equipment to confirm it is safely installed.
- **Village Reports:**
 - Lode Star: In response to Cllr Mitchell's request for ideas to enhance Lode Star, it was suggested that the inclusion of a Resident's Guide to the services and activities available in the community would be a valuable addition as an annual insert
 - Website: Ian Middleton has announced his intention to step down from his role as Webmaster at the end of December. He has advised that his successor would need skills as a webmaster as well as some coding skills. Cllr Mitchell will invite him to write an article for Lode Star setting out what is required and inviting people to express an interest in taking on the role
 - Notice Board: Following Corinne Arnold's decision not to display notices in the Post Office, the Council agreed to the proposal from Cllr Stevens to allow the Council notice board next to the Old Vicarage entrance to be used for up to 6 x A4 advertisements for village events and other general interest notices. There will be no charge, and they may be displayed for up to 21 days, subject to the space not being needed for official notices. Commercial or business advertisements will not be accepted.

64/17 There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35 pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 9 October at 7.30 pm