

## Lode Parish Council

### Minutes of ordinary meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 8 April 2019

These minutes comprise 5 pages

**Present:** Cllrs R Stevens (Chairman), I Faulkner, T Crickmar, T Fitzgerald;  
D/Cllr A Sharp; Ms P Ingham-Watts (National Trust); Mr J Lince (Lode Tennis Club)

**36/19 Public Question Time:** Mr John Lince made a presentation on behalf of the Tennis Club. He explained that, following the gift of the court to the village, the Parish Council are the owners and the Tennis Club the custodians. The Club members have previously invested in a new surface which is recognised as one of the best in the area and can be used throughout the year. The Club is now proposing to replace the fence which has been damaged by vandals climbing over it. The replacement proposed offers a number of advantages: it is stronger than the existing fence, blends more into background (being sensitive to its setting on the Anglesey Abbey site) and includes a practice "wall". This latter is also made of mesh so doesn't adversely affect the view through to the Abbey Grounds. Mr Lince said that the Club works to encourage the participation of young people. Club members have so far raised around £4,000 of the quoted £11,290 net cost. They have informal indication that a bid could be made to the Lode with Longmeadow Village Trust. He asked the Council to agree to the Parish Council making the application jointly, as had been done with the new surface project. The height of the new fencing is planned to be 3.5 mtrs. D/Cllr Sharp questioned whether planning permission would be required; there is a need to check whether the height proposed is exactly the same as that of the existing fence. For the National Trust, Ms Ingham-Watts said that the Trust would be supportive in principle but asked that the detailed plan be submitted to the Trust before commencing work so that she could secure the necessary clearance as the court is within the Anglesey boundary. Cllr Crickmar asked about the policy of the Club to low income families. Mr Lince replied that the annual membership fee of £20 for an individual and £50 for a family was substantially lower than the charges made by other local clubs. The Club currently has around 86 members. Cllr Stevens suggested that the Club should apply for the remaining section 106 money earmarked for Lode which he understands to be around £1,200. D/Cllr Sharp agreed to check whether planning permission is required.

**37/19 Apologies for absence:** Cllrs F Platten, R Small, P Lane; D/Cllr D Chaplin; C/Cllr M Shuter; Mr C Platten (LLVT); Mr M Lord (Neighbourhood Watch)

**38/19 Declarations of interest (prejudicial/other):** none

**39/19 Suspension of Standing Order relating to notice of items on the agenda:** Standing Orders preclude the discussion of an item for decision not notified to the Clerk in time for the publication of the agenda. Cllr Stevens proposed and Cllr Fitzgerald seconded the motion that this standing order be suspended to allow for the discussion of this item by the Council to enable the Club to proceed with making grant applications. This was agreed unanimously

**40/19 Lode Tennis Club:** The Council resolved unanimously to agree that joint grant applications could be made by the Council together with the Tennis Club. The Clerk will be the point of contact for the Club

**41/19 Minutes of March meeting:** signed as a correct record

**42/19 Matters arising from the March meeting:**

- **Removal of items from the Cemetery hedge:** Council members had understood that the items would be cleared by 7 April but Cllr Platten advised by email that she understood work on the property was commencing on that date and the items would be removed as part of the project
- **Speed indicator:** Cllr Fitzgerald has downloaded data from the indicator which suggests that it has led to a reduction in average speed past its current location near the Abbey of around

5mph. He plans to prepare more detailed information for the next meeting. Cllrs Stevens and Fitzgerald agreed to change the location of the indicator on Saturday 13 April

- **Abandoned vehicle in Mill Road:** Following the last meeting, D/Cllr Sharp followed up the report with the relevant officer in ECDC who reported it again to the DVLA. Councillors expressed concern that the issue still has not been resolved and that a statement from the DVLA that they would look at it when next in the area was not reassuring. They felt that if this had been in an urban area the issue would have been resolved much more quickly. Cllr Stevens reported that a further vehicle has been left in Millard's Lane which is not taxed. Unlike the vehicle in Mill Road, it appears this one may not belong to a local resident
- **Leaning cricket net on Recreation Ground:** Cllr Stevens said that the contact for this should be on the Club website; the Clerk will write and ask for it to be made secure

**43/19 County Council Report:** None

**44/19 District Council Report:** D/Cllr Sharp said that he understood the application for 15A Fairhaven Close was being resubmitted with adjustments to the plans for access. There were two outstanding planning appeals within the district. One at Burrough Green has been turned down by the Inspector. Another in respect of a development of new housing near Hilton Park Care Home in Bottisham is still pending. D/Cllr Sharp said that he is standing in Woodditton Ward for the forthcoming election so would not be covering Lode if elected. He said that he is planning to attend the Council's Annual Meeting in May.

Cllr Stevens said that he had heard that the Inspector's rejection of the ECDC Local Plan may have been linked to her concern about a Community Land Trust backed by the District Council proposing a development of 500 homes in Kennett which currently has only 170 dwellings. Cllr Stevens thanked D/Cllr Sharp for all his support to the Parish Council since he was elected three years ago

**45/19 Parish Reports:**

- **National Trust:** Ms Ingham-Watts said that maintenance work was being undertaken on the Mill. Scaffolding is being erected to facilitate external decoration. Cllr Stevens advised that care should be taken to ensure that scaffolding should not be placed in the clay of the river bed – when this was done on a previous occasion, it caused water to seep into the foundations of the Mill. Ms Ingham-Watts thanked him for the information and will pass it on to those responsible for the project. She said that March had been a good month for visits though the windy weather meant that her staff had had to respond to a number of issues with fallen trees and branches
- **National Trust Liaison:** The group last met on 12 March and notes were circulated to Council members by Cllr Platten. Ms Ingham-Watts said the meeting had focused on the learning arising from the recent Winter Lights season and on plans to develop Hoe Fen. It was noted that a larger dog bin has been installed by the Mill. Cllr Stevens said he had put up a notice indicating the location of other bins if this one is full
- **Cycle Way:** no report
- **Neighbourhood Watch:** In his email apologising for absence from the meeting, Mr Lord noted that a flat bed trailer had been stolen from a farm in Lode and a further burglary had taken place at a polo facility in the area. He noted that despite the victims being members of Countryside Watch, the alerts had not been published through the Neighbourhood Watch system in the usual way. He referred this matter to D/Cllr Sharp
- **Speedwatch:** Cllr Stevens reported that Mrs Holmes had expressed interest in joining the Speedwatch team which means there are now sufficient numbers to operate the watch in accordance with the requirements. The team are required to undertake a training session to cover the operating rules; doing this means that they are covered by the scheme's insurance. The Coordinator has advised that a complete set of equipment including a separate speed indicator can be made available to the team. Cllr Stevens advised that this

would be preferable to using the PC's own speed indicator. While prosecutions cannot be made as part of the watch, letters may be sent by the Police to speeding drivers

- **Tree Officer:** There was no report to the meeting. The Clerk advised that the remittance advice from Cambridgeshire County Council for the work at Swan Corner had just been received
- **Wicken Fen Liaison:** The next meeting takes place during this month and Cllr Faulkner is attending. He will check with Cllr Small whether there are any issues that need to be raised. It was suggested that he might raise a question about plans for Oily Hall – there is a sense that the areas closest to Wicken Fen get attention whereas more distant parts of the Fen may not feature so much. It was pointed out that on White Fen Drove the polythene sheets which are believed to be covering the maize crop are being left loose and are at risk of blowing into ditches

#### **46/19 Parish Council Reports:**

- **Purchase of Fassage Green Site with Lode with Longmeadow Village Trust (LLVT):** The Clerk reported on progress. We are awaiting confirmation from the Diocese's surveyor on the exact location of the north east boundary on the Fassage Green site. Jenny Scarff, surveyor to the National Trust, has indicated that the Trust will accept the advice of the Diocese about the boundary. The Clerk reported on the advice from NALC on the structure of the purchase. The advice was brief in the extreme and he suggested that the issue raised about potential conflict of interest between the joint purchasers had been more fully covered in the advice from Ashtons who are acting for LLVT and the Parish Council in the purchase. He said that LLVT had agreed to pay 80% of the solicitors' costs for preparing the lease by the joint purchasers to the Parish Council as the tenant. The Parish Council resolved unanimously as follows:
  - Cllrs Stevens and Fitzgerald will sign the Deed of Surrender, the Contract and Transfer Deed on behalf of the Council at the meeting on Monday 8 April;
  - Cllr Stevens and the Clerk can give authorisation to the Solicitors to exchange contracts once information on the boundary is received provided no adverse findings are reported by the Diocese's surveyor;
  - If the boundary issue is not resolved by the date of the election on 3 May it should be referred to the next Council meeting to review or renew the authorisation;
  - The Parish Council will pay 20% of the legal fees arising from the purchase and preparation of the lease.
- **Audit and Risk Review:** The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has been randomly selected for the 'intermediate' level review by the external auditors. There is no additional cost to the Council. The additional requirement for this level is the examination of the Council's review of risk, including any papers and minutes arising from consideration by the Council. The Council considered the risk review matrix prepared by the Clerk. It was agreed that this should both identify risks and ensure a management response proportionate to the small size of the Council's operation. The main issue identified in the discussion was the best way of ensuring a secure backup of the Council's digital records. Cllr Fitzgerald agreed to meet with the Clerk to identify options. Cllr Crickmar had obtained a copy of a similar exercise conducted by another small Council. It was recognised that this was over-detailed for the scale of operation but the Clerk agreed to review it in case it identified significant areas omitted from the current matrix

- **Finance:** The following payments were agreed by the Council:

J E Giles	Salary & PAYE	£360.58	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
J E Giles	Mileage for delivering election forms to Ely and clerk's briefing in Sutton 76 miles	£34.20	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
W Jaggard	Cemetery	£155.36	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
W Jaggard	Fuel for Mower	£6.03+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Green Energy	Fassage Hall	£186.79+VAT	Local Gov't Act 1972 s 133
Wave	Cemetery Water	£56.52	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Truelink	Grass cutting	£237.71+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
G-Core Ltd	Annual service Fassage Hall htg	£472.50+VAT	Local Gov't Act 1972 s 133
EON	Street lighting	£78.34+VAT	Highways Act 1980 s 301

- **Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies:** The Council has received £5,277 funds since the scheme was started. The Council resolved unanimously that the amounts should be allocated as follows:
  - **£ 913** Contribution to cost of new play equipment. (The total cost of the equipment net of VAT was £7,341.98. A donation of £2,500 was received towards the project. When the CIL receipt of £913 is applied to the scheme the net contribution from the Parish Council's reserves is £3,928.98)
  - **£1,000** Required contribution to CCC towards the cost of the speed indicator
  - **£3,364** Contribution to the cost of purchasing Fassage Green with LLVT (the Parish Council share of this cost is estimated at £9,500-10,500)
- **Planning:** No new applications or updates had been received during the month. D/Cllr Sharp referred to an expected revised application in respect of 15A Fairhaven Close in his report. He will also enquire what is happening to the application for 39 Longmeadow
- **Election update:** The Clerk reported that, as there have been no nominations apart from six of the currently serving Parish Councillors, they will be elected to the Council on 2 May. He advised that Acceptance of Office forms will need to be completed by each Councillor at the commencement of the Annual Meeting. In order to take up seats all Councillors will need to have lodged an Election Expenses form (even if no expenses were incurred) and a new Register of Interests form. He will establish whether these forms are to be sent to Councillors and the point at which the casual vacancy may be advertised
- **Cemetery:** Cllr Faulkner reported that some plastic flowers from graves had been dumped in the hedge
- **Fassage Hall:** The accounts have now been prepared and will be presented to the Parish Council at the next meeting
- **Recreation Ground:** The time between the end of the football season and the beginning of the cricket season creates an opportunity for renewing the thistle treatment commenced last year. Cllr Crickmar had found a laser gun on Amazon suitable for targeted weed eradication. She will forward details to Cllr Small and the Clerk

- **Footpaths:** Cllr Stevens reported an eruption on the path between the Baptist Chapel and Mill Road. He will discuss how to repair it with Mr Lord. Cllr Stevens has also repaired two verges in Lode Road which had been damaged by vehicles
- **Village Reports:** Cllr Platten had forwarded the report on the proposed Cambridge Autonomous Metro to all Councillors. It was unclear what route the Mildenhall spur, which is the one closest to Lode, will follow. If it were to follow the route of the old railway line, this is not close to the main communities it ought to serve
- **Annual Parish Open Meeting:** The Council resolved that this should take place on Tuesday 21 May in the Fassage Hall

**47/19 Date of Annual Parish Council Meeting:** Monday 13 May at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.26pm