

Lode Parish Council
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 11
November 2019

These minutes comprise 4 pages and Appendix

Present: Cllrs R Stevens (Chairman), F Platten, I Faulkner; C/Cllr M Shuter, D/Cllr J Trapp, Ms P Ingham-Watts (National Trust), Mr P Dean

106/19 Questions from the public: Mr P Dean addressed the meeting in respect of the planning application 19/01470/OUT to be considered by the Council later in the meeting. He said that the site which is the subject of the application lies outside the village envelope. If permission is given for it to be developed, it will set a precedent for future developments outside the envelope. He said that such developments would be the end of Longmeadow as we know it

107/19 Apologies: Cllrs T Fitzgerald, T Crickmar, R Small

108/19 Declaration of interest: None

109/19 Matters arising:

- **18/01416/FUL 39 Longmeadow:** D/Cllr Trapp had raised the delay in resolving this application with the Planning Officer who reported that the applicants have informally submitted amendments which have been considered by the Conservation Officer. If these are formally submitted, they will be the subject of formal consultation
- **The Guildhall, Lode:** D/Cllr Trapp said that he had been advised that no action could be taken to require improvement of the Guildhall as the building is not listed
- **Cycle Way verge cutting:** Cllr Platten reported that the verges that lie behind the hedge had not been maintained at the same time as the verges bordering the road. C/Cllr Shuter explained that this is because different equipment is required attached to a quad bike and these do not normally operate outside urban areas. He said that the County Council is changing its verge cutting policy and, apart from areas where more frequent cutting is required for safety reasons, they will only be cut once a year in order to promote wild flower growth. As wild flowers grow on poor soil, it will be a requirement that mowings are cleared away to prevent them breaking down and enriching the soil. In future all new highway developments will be required to have "legacy" funding to ensure that they can be maintained. The problem arises for existing infrastructure for which maintenance funding is inadequate. He undertook to pursue the matter of maintaining the verge inside the hedge, recognising that failure to do so will allow some invasive plants to become established potentially damaging the track itself
- **War Memorial:** St James' PCC have been granted permission to reduce the height of the trees forming the rear of the memorial and to maintain them at this height by annual pruning in future. The Council noted with gratitude that Anglesey Abbey staff have now undertaken the necessary work in time for the Remembrance commemorations
- **Play Area:** Cllrs Stevens and Fitzgerald have filled in the larger cracks in the safety tiles under most of the equipment
- **Ashtons Legal invoice:** £600 of the amount sought from the Parish Council has been paid as agreed at the October meeting. Mr L Johnson (Chair of the Lode with Longmeadow Village Trust) has contacted Ashtons to ask for a full breakdown of the costs incurred but has not received a reply to date
- **Donation for Fassage Green:** The Clerk has sent a letter of thanks to the donor
- **New bracket for speed indicator:** The new bracket has just arrived and Cllr Stevens will arrange to fit it as soon as possible

110/19 County Council Report: Cllr Stevens raised a number of recent highways problems with C/Cllr Shuter:

- **Speeding in Station Road:** This is a perennial problem and it is difficult to identify a solution that will be acceptable to all users of the road. By placing the speed indicator on the sign by the Cemetery road it will be possible to record speed data to identify the extent of the problem and, if appropriate, ask for police involvement if any significant pattern emerges
- **Mud on the road caused by farm vehicles:** Recently the vehicle of a local resident slid over the road. C/Cllr Shuter said that there is a clear requirement for farmers to clear any mud left on the road and any infringement should be reported to Highways immediately
- **Public footpath around the Fassage Recreation Ground:** Cllr Platten pointed out that this is in poor condition and having it resurfaced would enhance its usefulness to young people learning to cycle and also make it accessible for disabled people. C/Cllr Shuter said that funds have been earmarked for foot and cycle path maintenance and that funds will be prioritised by key factors including condition and usage. He asked the Clerk to give him the footpath number for him to take it up with the relevant officer
- **Continuing problems with drainage on Shrub Corner, outside 30 Lode Road:** Cllr Stevens reported that flooding occurs over half the width of the road after just a few millimetres of rain
- **White lines:** Cllr Stevens identified the crossroads, the right-angle bend in Lode Road (Shrub Corner) and the right-angle bend at the junction of Lode Road and the High Street as the problem areas. The white line on Shrub Corner (near 30 Lode Road) needs to be repositioned in the middle of the road (it was not moved when the road was widened). Otherwise, a central hatched area may be better to keep vehicles from swinging out or cutting the corner and colliding
- **Swan Corner:** Cllr Stevens outlined the issue regarding Swan Corner. Over the years, several attempts have been made to establish the ownership of this land. Highways paid for remedial work at the beginning of the year following the fall of a large branch. Recently concern has been identified regarding a large willow about 20m high which is within falling distance of the highway. This has been referred to Highways by the Clerk and C/Cllr Shuter agreed to reinforce the need to resolve the issue with Mr Clarke, the responsible officer, having been advised that the Parish Council has no power to take this on itself

C/Cllr Shuter said that assessment of trees on the A1303 on the approach to the Quy roundabout had concluded that about 40 trees will either need to be felled or have safety barriers placed around them. Any felled trees will be replaced and the Parish Council can apply to have some of the replacement trees. The officer responsible is Chris Boyle. The information will be passed to Liz King, Tree Officer. One or more suitable locations for planting will be identified.

C/Cllr Shuter advised that in future some Local Highways Improvement schemes would initially be implemented on a temporary basis to test whether the proposed solution really constitutes an improvement; if so, the change would be made permanent. There has been a problem in the past where changes made have caused more problems than they solved and further funding has had to be made available for their removal. Concerning wider environmental issues, he reported that CCC has declared an “environmental emergency”: rather than using this to spread alarm, he said that the intention is to lead by example and highlight innovations created by “greentech” companies in the area. The County Council is the largest landowner in the area so will be working to manage its land scientifically in future.

CCC is undertaking a comprehensive review of transport for young people with special educational needs. While there is a focus to maximise efficiency, the Council is equally concerned to focus on providing the service in a way that best meets the children’s needs.

C/Cllr Shuter highlighted the consultation underway in respect of the development of a “care village” in Bottisham. Whilst recognising the need for such accommodation, he said that he believed the use of greenfield land made this location inappropriate. He advised that there is a plan to close King’s

Parade in Cambridge to traffic because, as a high profile location, it could potentially be a terrorist target. The challenge will be creating barriers which do not unduly impede cyclists.

111/19 District Council Report: D/Cllr Trapp said that while 15% of Community Infrastructure Levy is automatically allocated to the Parish Councils where a development has taken place, the rest is held centrally and he is concerned that a large proportion of this gets allocated in the north of the District Council area. He suggested that one possible scheme in the south would be the upgrading of the cycle path between Bottisham and Swaffham Bulbeck. Cllr Platten asked about the possible extension of the footpath around the Fassage recreation ground to form a complete circuit and D/Cllr Trapp suggested that application could be made through himself and D/Cllr Cane. Cllr Stevens welcomed this because Lode is largely missing out on the 15% allocations from local developments as recently most of the new buildings have either had an agricultural restriction or been self-builds which do not attract the levy. He also suggested that the District Council should have a policy regarding renewable energy as well as those relating to housing and employment etc. It was pointed out that solar panels are being installed in Babraham Park and Ride which will provide power to recharge electric vehicles whilst parked there. The chargers do not need to be high capacity as the vehicles are usually left long enough for a trickle charge to be sufficient.

The written report from D/Cllrs Trapp and Cane is the appendix to these minutes

112/19 Parish Reports

- Anglesey Abbey:** Ms Ingham-Watts referred to a question raised at the recent Liaison Meeting about silver birches which appear to be leaning. She assured the meeting that these trees are assessed annually and the recent check confirms that they are safe and healthy. She reported that, from January, David Jordan will become Head Gardener and Tom Fradd will become Grounds Manager. Planning for the Winter Lights events is progressing well – the National Trust have engaged with the Security Advisory Group given the size of the event. There is close liaison with residents of Mill Road over the volume testing for the music to be played during the event. There will be a wall of hay bales at the rear of the area where the music is played to limit the sound travelling to Mill Road. She has noted the comments from Mr Lord regarding the website and parking in Mill Road
 Cllr Stevens asked about Hoe Fen; Ms Ingham-Watts said a plan is being developed to maximise its safety and amenity as a play area as well as improving the management of the woodland. The main limitation is its distance from mains services – it is a 25 minute walk to the toilets in the main Visitor Centre. She will share more information on proposals once advice has been received from their consultant – this will precede any application for planning permission

113/19 Parish Council Reports

- Finance approvals:** The following payments were agreed:

J E Giles	Salary & PAYE	£393.33	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
J E Giles	Stamps (paid by deb cd)	£12.06	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Homebase (per RSt)	Padlock	£20.62+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery	£169.16	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Truelink Ltd	Grasscutting	£296.83+ VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Truelink Ltd	Vertidrainning	£320+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Morelock	Bracket for speed indicator	£62+VAT	Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 s 72(1)
Octopus Energy	Fassage Hall electricity (collected by DD)	£161.90+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10

- Fassage Recreation Ground:** Liz King (Tree Officer) together with Cllrs Stevens and Platten have assessed most of the substantial trees surrounding the Fassage recreation ground. The Council resolved that the Clerk should ask Truelink to quote for cutting the hedges surrounding the ground. This should include removing all cuttings from the site and ensuring that no debris is left on the path risking punctures to cycles etc

- **Cemetery:** Efforts to identify who may have left the equipment near the pergola in the cemetery have not yet yielded a result. Cllr Platten will check with Richard Beardsmore and the Clerk will contact Southgates who were responsible for the recent burial
- **Co-option to the Parish Council:** Cllr Stevens had spoken with someone who has recently moved into the village who is currently on the PC of another local village. He has invited her to contact the Clerk for an application form and to attend a meeting of the Council
- **Planning: 19/01470/OUT – Land south of 60 Longmeadow:** The Parish Council consider that before the question of access is considered, a determination needs to be made about whether it is appropriate to develop this site at all. There were differing views ranging from one that it is inappropriate to approve development in open countryside to a view that it should be considered in the light of the need for more housing. The Council noted that at this stage there is no information about the nature of the housing to be developed and whether it will be affordable;

Comments were made about the already extant issues with high volumes of traffic speeding along the B1102 creating risks for vehicles leaving Longmeadow, especially turning right; It was noted that the development of this site had not been proposed during the period when the local plan was being reviewed. There was concern that if permission is given to develop this site, it will lead to further exceptions being made to develop the land owned by the County Council to the rear of the proposed development and also along the rest of the road going south towards the B1102.

The Parish Council concludes that, given that this site was not included in the 2015 Local Plan nor was it proposed during the consultation for a replacement plan, the application for permission to develop this site must be called in and determined by the Planning Committee

- **Parish Questionnaire – update:** deferred to next meeting
- **Motion proposed by Cllr Crickmar: “Lode Parish Council supports in principle the campaign promoted by Power for People in respect of the Local Electricity Bill. It asks Power for People to advise local councils how to restart this campaign after the General Election”:** deferred to next meeting

114/19 Correspondence: The Parish Council noted the following items of correspondence received:

ECDC	Parish Precept 2020-21 (based on 365.7 Band D properties. Cf 358.3 for 2019-20)
Sally Bard, CCC	Operation London Bridge
Local resident et al (emails copied to PC)	Speeding on Fen Road & Station Road with suggested measures to control (Follow on from prev month)
Mrs M Milne, Bottisham Village College	Punctures caused by discarded hedge clippings on shared use path at Lode crossroads
Cllr Platten et al	Grass cutting regime on Lode/Quy Cycle Path
Lucy Frazer, MP	Public Transport Survey
Various	Willow tree on Swan Corner

115/19: Items for next agenda: Budget and precept for 2020-21, and see above (Parish Questionnaire and Motion proposed by Cllr Crickmar)

District Councillor report to Parish Councils in the Bottisham Ward November 2019

Full Council discussed two motions relating to the Climate Emergency. The motion which was seconded by Charlotte was voted down. Charlotte and others tried to amend the other motion, to include some commitments for the Council to take action, but the only amendment which was accepted was for the Council to declare a Climate Emergency. The weaker motion was passed despite a petition being presented to the Council calling for strong targets and early actions. The people who brought the petition have set up a Group called East Cambridgeshire CAN (Climate Action Network) to find ways to make East Cambs zero carbon by 2030. Anyone interested in joining can contact them on - eastcambscan@yahoo.com.

Full Council also agreed the latest projects to receive funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Most of these are in the north of the District, so we are keen to support applications from this ward. In order to be eligible for CIL funding a project must:

- Be necessary to support local growth.
- The total cost of the project must be between £50,000 - £2,000,000.
- Match funding and a financial contribution from the organisation submitting application must have been secured.
- The project must be deliverable within 3-5 years.
- If the project is highways or education related, the application must be accompanied by a letter of support from the relevant CCC department.

We would like to hear suggestions for bids for this funding, eg for cycle paths, community heating schemes or traffic management schemes.

Full Council considered a motion not to start a new Local Plan for at least 18 months, instead relying on the 2015 Local Plan. Local Plans are expensive, and we could understand the reluctance to commit about £1million to developing a new Plan. But we are only too aware of the planning 'Wild West' that local communities continue to face since the withdrawal of the Emerging Local Plan. We therefore asked that the Council should consult with Parish Councils before deciding not to act for at least 18 months. Unfortunately, the amendment calling for this consultation was defeated. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be drafted to address areas not currently covered by the 2015 Local Plan. Parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan will have better control over local developments and we are pleased some of our Parishes are working on Neighbourhood Plans. But we do not think it is right that the District Council has abrogated its responsibility and is instead relying on Parish Councils fill the gaps left since it withdrew its Emerging Local Plan. The 2015 Plan is out of date in many ways, for example there are no plans for electric car charging points to be a standard requirement for new developments.

Full Council also approved a recommendation from the Independent Panel to increase some allowances for Councillors with additional responsibility. This will cost an extra £40,000 each year.