



# Lode Parish Council

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*Chairman:* Cllr Rob Small *Vice Chairman:* Cllr Fran Platten *Parish Clerk:* Su Field

## MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2023

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Venue:** Passage Hall

**Present:** Cllr R Small – Chairman  
Cllr F Platten – Vice Chairman  
Cllr C Ferdinando  
Cllr R Page – Apologies  
CCllr A Sharp

Members of public: 0

### 23-24.1 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone in attendance.

The Chairman acknowledged Charlie Platten's commitment and ever enthusiastic input and contribution to many PC related and community matters over the years. He is fondly remembered and will be sadly missed.

Lucy Wells is interested to join the PC. Earliest she can join is after 15<sup>th</sup> May. The intention is to co-opt her at that point.

### 23-24.2 Apologies for Absence

Cllr R Page – Apologies – Accepted.

Clerk – Su Field – Accepted.

### 23-24.3 Declarations of Interest

None

### 23-24.4 Public Participation

N/A

### 23-24.5 Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed accordingly.

### 23-24.6 Finance Matters

a) The Chairman was provided with invoices in relation to each of the items listed below. These items were agreed for payment and initialled accordingly.

The Chairman was also provided with the most up to date bank statement from Barclays bank for perusal and was initialled accordingly.

All payments and receipts have been input into the Scribe accountancy software package and the Clerk furnished the Chairman with the bank reconciliation printout for March 2023 for signature.

S Field	Salary/PAYE & Home Working Allowance	£473.42	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
S Field	Printer Ink Cartridge	£27.99	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
W Jaggard	Cemetery Maintenance for February	£183.78	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
CAPALC	Affiliation Fee and DPO Scheme for 2023/24	£417.98	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
CAPALC	Outstanding Invoice from 2021 (Chair Training)	£50.00	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Freethought	Cybersecurity Essentials	£9.60	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Wave	Water Supply – Cemetery	£47.64	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
	<b>TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE PAID</b>	<b>£1,210.41</b>	

b) The transfer of the bank account from Barclays to Unity Trust bank is being progressed. Just one form outstanding which was signed by Cllrs Small and Platten and now the full application pack could be submitted. Agreed that priority should be given to complete account transfer.

#### 23-24.7 Planning Matters

a) 23/00338/FUL – Drover Bridge Cottage, 11 Station Road – Single storey rear extension.

It was RESOLVED to send the following response to ECDC:

No comment from the PC.

#### 23-24.8 County Council Matters

Cllr Alan Sharp reported that 2 main issues were discussed at recent CC public meeting:

- i) Cambourne – Cambridge planning concerns, particularly around Bourne airfield development and road access into Cambridge. CC requested a deferment for 3-4 months until further information about the proposed Oxford – Cambridge route is available.
- ii) Congestion charge. 15000 signatories on petition. Awaiting consultation results.

Potholes – ongoing concerns. Cllr Sharp wishes to continue to be informed about concerns around potholes and quality of repairs.

Greenways project / Lode & Longmeadow crossing: PC will share Lode PC input to the Greenways project with Cllr Sharp.

#### 23-24.9 District Council Matters

Below is the report received from the District Councillor for information.

### Parish Council report April 2023

The Operational Services Committee had a presentation from the CCC Youth and Community Coordinator, Lizzi Wales, as well as from Sergeant Pike of Cambridgeshire Constabulary, and they mentioned their involvement with youth in the County. They cited how they were able to reduce youth anti-social behaviour in Bottisham, and their Road Safety Awareness courses; their approach was to work in partnership with local communities, and they have a programme of Summer Detached/Outreach youth work project. Well worth discussing with them any concerns over youth ASB - Email: [Lizzi.Wales@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lizzi.Wales@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

The District may be having black bins for general waste, and a sum of money has been set aside for this; it rather depends on the directive from central Government on how waste is to be collected. The Committee also approved the purchase of new HVO-fuelled waste vehicles for our waste fleet; HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) fuel has almost the same emissions of carbon dioxide as electric vehicles, but the capital cost is about 40% of the cost of electric vehicles. This will reduce the Council's carbon footprint significantly. It was also decided to introduce in-cab technology for routing, a feature that had been advocated by Charlotte and John almost a year ago.

At the Finance and Assets Committee, there was a bid for £10,060 from Kennett CLT for funding towards their completing the development and purchase off the developer. This is a fund set up by ECDC to help CLTs start their ventures into providing affordable housing for the community. Any CLT may bid for start-up funds from the pot of £100,000 that was set aside for this purpose.

The bid from Kennett CLT shows how complicated the finances of ECTC are. ECTC took the planning proposals to ECDC for outline planning permission. Once they had permission, the land, with permission, was sold to Bellway homes who are now developing the site. ECTC received significant financial benefit from this arrangement. But now the CLT must make payments to Bellway Homes, for which ECDC is giving them a grant. So there is money coming in to one ECDC pot and going out from another ECDC pot. Where there is money coming in from ECTC which is genuinely additional, it is often money which would come from any developer – eg CIL payments. It is therefore really difficult to see what, if any, financial benefit is coming to ECDC from ECTC.

Also at the same Committee, it was reported that ECDC was successful in its bid from UK Shared Prosperity Fund and was allocated £839,851 (sic). £180,000 was set aside for a *Pride of Place East Cambridgeshire* fund to enable Parishes to create or improve local spaces for the pride of the local residents and for access to improve health and well-being. There was also funds set up for Business Growth (£208,000), Local Enterprise Support Scheme for start-up businesses (£111,851), for more cycle feasibility studies (£150,000), for promoting East Cambridgeshire as a place to visit and explore (£100,000), and for promoting Digital Inclusion (£90,000). Information about bids for these funds will be forthcoming.

The Audit Committee met mainly to review the Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 and the external audit report. The external audit report sent out with the papers was incomplete and we were given a verbal update which was very hard to follow. Even with that update, the audit was not complete – including the work on how the two trading companies had been included in the accounts. This is an area where the auditors have found material errors in previous years. Charlotte proposed that the Committee should meet again to consider the final audit report and the post audit Statement of Accounts, but this was defeated, and the accounts were approved subject to any changes resulting from the audit “that, in the opinion of the Section 151 Officer, do not impact on the overall substance of the Accounts.” Charlotte did at least succeed in getting it agreed that the final audit report would come back to the Committee, as the Forward Agenda had made no provision for this.

The Accounts for 2021/22 have still not been published, even though the 2022/23 financial year has finished. This is not unique to ECDC it is a national problem which has been getting worse year on year since the government scrapped the Audit Commission in 2015 and transferred its responsibilities to the private sector. According to the National Audit Office in 2015/16 97% of local authorities published their accounts on time, by 2019/20 just 47% of local authorities published on time. The NAO also predicts that audit costs will rise by 150% for 2023/24 onwards compared to

2022/23 fees - [Progress update: Timeliness of local auditor reporting on local government in England \(nao.org.uk\)](https://www.nao.org.uk)

#### 23-24.10 Council Administration Matters

a) Clerk's Update: Freethought to support Su in establishing MS account and organising Sharepoint accordingly.

d) Change of Bank Accounts – There is still one form requiring signature before the switch can be implemented by Unity and this will be progressed in order for the forms to be submitted.

#### 23-24.11 Environmental and Open Space Matters

a) Meeting with Allotment Tenants re water management issues – Following discussion it was agreed that a meeting be called with all available Allotment Tenants on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm to discuss the water management issues at the site. Parish Councillors attending will be: Cllrs Small and Ferdinando. Meeting point will be the allotments, with option to convene in the Fassage Hall afterwards if required.

b) The Clerk had received communication from ECTC in respect of the new charges for grass cutting throughout the Parish. These are as follows:

Area	Cost (inc VAT)
Village verges including strimming	£217.62
Cycle path from Lode boundary with Quy	£54.41
Cut and collect grass opposite the Church	£54.41
Recreation Ground	£163.21
Play Area and grass by footpath from Fassage Close	£163.21
<b>TOTAL COST PER VISIT</b>	<b>£652.86</b>

Following discussion it was AGREED that the PC wishes to continue to engage ECTC for this purpose, but noted that cutting should be on demand, ie total cost will not necessarily apply every time. (proposed by Cllr Small, seconded by Cllr Platten)

Noted that a re-quote is required from ECTC for Fassage Green annual cut once flowering season is over.

c) Follow up required regarding scraping the path around the Fassage.

#### 23-24.12 Community Matters

a) Meeting to be arranged with Fassage Hall Committee – this will be arranged in due course. On hold until June

b) Future upkeep of Parish Council owned bus shelters

The Clerk provided those present with an estimation of costs from one provider of bus shelters to inform the discussions.

Following discussion it was AGREED that further investigations would be undertaken - Clls Small and Ferdinando will review the Longmeadow shelter in particular. To be included on the agenda for May for further discussion.

c) Cllrs discussed the proposed new noticeboard and options from Greenbarnes and AGREED to proceed with purchase, with £1500 allocated (ex VAT). Proposed by Cllr Small, seconded by Cllr

Platten. Cllrs Small and Ferdinando will review current noticeboard and revert with final measurements / requirements. 2-bay A2 Aluminium in green is preferred choice, TBC pending final review.

d) DCllr Cane had provided, via email, an update to the County Council's change in policy in respect of 20mph speed limits. Funding is available to put schemes in place and the Parish Council were invited to consider whether they wished to submit an application. Deadline is 30<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Ferdinando will canvas the school bus queue. Cllr Small will ask Meleena Walsh to promote on the village Facebook page.

e) Following discussions about potential upcoming projects, Cllrs agreed to think about appropriate ways to engage with the community about improvement projects for the playground and Fassage Green area, potentially utilising Village Trust funds if possible. Example: new playground equipment. To be discussed further at May meeting.

f) Cooperation / collaboration between PC and Village Trust. The PC would welcome a closer connection between the PC and the Trust, as happened previously. Cllr Platten will talk to Peter Thurlby to start discussion.

g) Cllr Small discussed the proposed improvements to road safety for cyclists and pedestrians crossing at the South side of the Lode Road / Main Road junction. Cllr Small met with James Chapman from the Local Highways Initiative who has proposed plans to extend the footpath beyond the bus stop and move the crossing point to a safer place. Cllr Small proposed to increase the PC contribution to the revised scheme from 10% to 15%. To be further discussed at May meeting.

23-24.13 Correspondence (for information only)

The Clerk has forwarded all Weekly Planning Lists from ECDC via email as received. No other communications received.

23-24.14 Communications

Nothing for this meeting.

23-24.15 Items for next agenda (15<sup>th</sup> May 2023)

Co-Option

Bus Shelters

Project Planning

LHI Parish Council contribution

Next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 commencing at 7pm for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council to be immediately followed by the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council [date moved due to Coronation Bank Holiday]. Both meetings to take place at Fassage Hall.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_