

LIDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9th July 2020

Councillors present: Chris Stembridge (Chairman), Carol Sharp (Vice-Chairman), John Whitefield, Annie Lee and Hayley Mablesen

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), County Councillor Mary Evans and District Councillor Mike Chester

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were made.

3. Approval of minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 14th May 2020 and the planning meeting held on 10th June 2020.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. County Councillors Report

Mary Evans sent a written report prior to the meeting.

She spoke about how quickly Suffolk County Council reacted to the current Coronavirus pandemic. They managed to ensure that there was always sufficient PPE in Suffolk.

5. Police issues

A couple of speed checks took place in Lidgate during lockdown. The results are not known yet. The Police are encouraging communities to restart Speedwatch when they feel this is appropriate.

6. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There was one outstanding councillor action.

7. District Councillor's report

Mike Chester sent a written report prior to the meeting.

He updated the Parish Council on current planning applications:

- The Old Rectory application is still under consideration. There is no officer recommendation as yet.
- The application for the land adjacent to the Old Forge may be recommended for approval as there is already approval for one home on this site.

As Lidgate Parish Council has objected to both these applications, they will go before Development Control.

John Whitefield explained that the Lidgate Archaeological Group has asked Historic England if the vertical burial ground can be added as a scheduled monument.

8. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of schedule of payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- HMRC – PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 – **£142.20**
- J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 – **£4.50**

Chris Stembridge and Carol Sharp signed the schedule of payments and invoices.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings

c) Receipts and Payments (including online payments) made since the last meeting

Receipts

Receipts	Date	Bank	Description	Total
Bank interest	08/06/2020	Barclays reserve account	Bank interest received	£1.55
				£1.55

Payments

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
15/05/2020	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£29.31
15/05/2020	Donation	Lidgate Village Hall	£500.00
15/05/2020	Churchyard maintenance	Friends of Lidgate Churchyard	£150.00
15/05/2020	Donation	Lidgate PCC	£150.00
29/05/2020	Clerk's salary	Joanne Kirk	
01/06/2020	Repairs to village gates	Mr S Mableson	£220.00
11/06/2020	Pension payment	Risby Parish Council	£15.00
30/06/2020	Clerk's salary	Joanne Kirk	
			£1,443.75

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

d) Bank balances as of 30th June 2020 and confirmation of bank reconciliation

Current account	£5,129.25
Barclays reserve account	£5,596.99
Total in Banks	£10,726.24

Chris Stembridge and Carol Sharp verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls

Carol Sharp completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

f) Approval of the continued use of electronic banking

It was resolved that Lidgate Parish Council would continue to use electronic banking.

g) Disposal of Parish Council documents

It was resolved that the clerk would be authorised to spend up to £60 to dispose of parish council documents with the cost split between her six councils.

h) Internal auditor's Report

No issues were raised by the Internal Auditor Cathy Whitaker and the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 has been completed. The clerk has submitted the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor PFK Littlejohn.

i) Update on the inspection of Parish Council property

The inspection of Parish Council property is now complete. The following issues were raised:

- The branches overhanging the bus shelter need to be cut back.
- The hinge on the noticeboard in the Street needs fixing.
- The noticeboard outside the village hall needs cleaning
- The wooden posts near the pond are broken or missing. The Wills Estate will supply the timber.
- The bench by the pond area needs cleaning. Hayley Mableson agreed to do this.
- There is a hole in the netting of one of the football goals
- The bench near Orchard Close needs cleaning and the weeds around it clearing. Hayley Mableson agreed to do this.
- The branches near the pendulum crossing on the playing field need cutting back
- Dogs mess was found on the playing field.

It was resolved that the remaining actions would be carried out by the Lidgate Tidy Group when the current Coronavirus restrictions allow the group to meet again.

As dog fouling is now a problem on the playing field, it was resolved that:

- Dogs would be banned from using the playing field in future.
- A gate would be put up between the pub and the playing field. Carol Sharp agreed to speak to the pub, Hayley Mableson agreed to speak to Graham Flux.
- Steve Mableson would be asked to quote for a gate
- The clerk would obtain a quote for two new signs for the gate at the main entrance and the entrance from the pub.

9. Planning

No applications were received.

10. Review of the following policy documents

a) Financial Regulations

It was resolved that the following amendment would be made to section 4.5:

~~In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, The clerk in conjunction with the Chairman may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.~~

NALC has not yet issued advice regarding their model financial regulations, however it was resolved that following footnotes would be added to the bottom of **section 11** to show the correct thresholds for contracts:

Section 11 – Contracts

The footnotes should now read

- a. For public supply and public service contracts £189,330
- b. For public works contracts £4,733,252

b) Standing Orders

It was resolved that the following amendments would be made:

- Section 1a - A public forum will be held at the start of the meeting at which members of the public are invited to speak to councillors *about any items on the agenda.*
- Section 1a - *If public meetings are not allowed (as for example during the Coronavirus outbreak in 2020), remote meetings will be held via Zoom. Members of the public can request the meeting login details and join the meeting. A public forum will be held at the start of the meeting at which members of the public are invited to speak to councillors about any items on the agenda.*
- Section 4d - ***If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Monitoring Officer at West Suffolk Council***

It was also resolved the following amendments would be made as recommended by NALC:

- Section 17 – Financial controls and Procurement (parts f and g)
 - f) ***A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £189,330 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,733,252 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.***
 - g) ***A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £378,660 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,733,252 for a works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.***

c) Equal Opportunities Policy

It was resolved that no amendments were necessary.

11. Approval of the following policy documents:

a) Protocol for dealing with correspondence

It was resolved that the Protocol for dealing with correspondence would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

b) Persistent and vexatious complaints and correspondence policy

It was resolved that the Persistent and Vexatious Complaints and Correspondence Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

c) Planning applications and how to respond and the role of the Parish Council in dealing with planning applications

It was resolved that the document Planning Applications and How to Respond would be approved and uploaded onto the website along with an explanation of the role of the Parish Council in dealing with planning applications.

d) Procedure for handling requests for information

It was resolved that the Procedure for Handling Requests for Information would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

e) Filming and recording at meetings policy

It was resolved that the Filming and Recording at Meetings Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website

f) Email policy for councillors

It was resolved that the Email Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website and that councillors would set up separate accounts for Parish Council emails, if they do not have them already.

12. Highways/Rights of Way/Tree Issues

a) Damaged wooden posts by the pond

The Wills Estate has agreed to supply replacement posts. Steve Mableson and John Whitefield have agreed to install them.

b) Verge cutting along the Belt

This item is ongoing.

c) Update on footpath number 6

Suffolk County Council's Rights of Way Officer Sarah Barron has spoken to the landowner who confirmed that she has placed logs next to the track to prevent people walking on the horse track instead of the public footpath following an incident there a few weeks ago where a girl fell off a horse due to someone walking on the track.

Sarah Barron sent through a map showing the correct alignment of the public footpath which follows the line of the ditch not the track. The landowner has said that the correct route of the public footpath is clear, the part that has the logs on is the area that is not the public footpath.

It was resolved that the clerk would contact Sarah Barron and ask if it would be possible for one of the councillors to walk the route with her to see the exact line of the path and request better signage if necessary.

d) Three Villages footpath from Lidgate to Cropley Grove and Dalham

Parts of this section are very overgrown, and it is difficult for walkers to follow the correct line of the path. The path is also very close to riverbank and there is a risk of people slipping down into the river with the path being so overgrown.

It was resolved that the clerk would ask Sarah Barron if it would be possible for a councillor to walk this route with her as well and see the correct line of the path and whether any action can be taken to improve it.

e) Footpath leaflet

Chris Stembridge asked about the progress of the Lidgate footpath leaflet. One route has been mapped already. The second route will be the new Permissive Path. Chris Stembridge agreed to walk the route and write a description.

f) Overgrown foliage on the bridge coming into Lidgate from Cropley Grove

Vegetation is obscuring the visibility of oncoming traffic posing a risk of an accident particularly in the direction from Lidgate to Cropley Grove. The clerk agreed to report it.

13. Local Government Association (LGA) consultation on a new model member code of conduct.

It was resolved that no comments would be submitted.

14. Playing field issues**a) Play inspection reports**

West Suffolk Council has emailed the Parish Council to say that it will be resuming playground inspections in July. The annual independent inspections are also currently being carried out and the reports for these will be issued as soon as they are available. A visual inspection was carried out on 10th June. No issues were raised.

b) Re-opening of the play and gym equipment

Government restrictions have been relaxed and outdoor play and gym equipment can now re-open. It was resolved that the equipment on the playing field would be re-opened, but that safety notices would be displayed stating that it is the responsibility of individual users to ensure that the safety guidelines are followed. The notices will be displayed on the main gate, on the zip wire and on the Parish Council website.

15. Village issues**a) Sign for Lidgate Castle**

The following quote has been received from Majisign.

1 x fully printed 3mm white Dilite Sign 1600mm x 800mm with 21 x 45 Oak framing - £290.00 or 1 x fully printed 8mm Clear Perspex 1600mm x 800mm with 21 x 45 Oak framing - £354.00 excluding delivery and VAT.

John Whitefield agreed to get a quote for the posts. Mike Chester has locality funding available of up to £475.00

16. Correspondence

a) Emails from the PCC and Friends of Lidgate Churchyard thanking Lidgate Parish Council for their annual donation and notifying the Parish Council of the contact details for their new treasurer (for information only)

b) Email from District Councillor Mike Chester offering locality funding of £475 (for information only)

c) Email from PCC confirming receipt of the Parish Council's donation and giving details of visiting arrangements for the church now that it has re-opened (for information only)

17. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda

The following items were brought to the attention of the Council for noting:

- The Parish Council needs to keep an eye on the current applications and when they are going to Development Control so that it can make a representation.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.06pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated