

LIDGATE PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15th January 2015**

Councillors present: C Bliss (Chairman), J Whitefield, S Sage, C Morley and L Gilmour

Also present: J Ince (Clerk), Borough Councillor Derek Redhead, County Councillor Mary Evans and one member of the public.

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum:

There are a number of overhanging trees as you leave Lidgate just beyond Pear Tree Cottage which are causing problems for all vehicles and in particular for buses and large vehicles. Overhanging trees in Bury Lane opposite Hill View are obstructing bin lorries. The clerk agreed to report them to Suffolk County Council.

During a recent shoot in the village access was gained onto the land via Bury Lane where there is Traffic Regulation Order in place. Unfortunately Suffolk County Council has not erected any signs yet, so there is now way of vehicles knowing that access is prohibited for all vehicles except farm vehicles. The vehicles caused considerable damage to the bridleway.

Another resident raised the issue of the Suffolk Hunt which used a drag to lay the scent in Lidgate recently. The hounds were ahead of the riders and went through the resident's garden. The resident spoke to the Hunt and has received an apology but if this happens again the resident would like to take some further action.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from S Child and C Wade and the reason for absence accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda.

3. Report from Derek Redhead

D Redhead said there will be no increase in the Borough Council element of the Council Tax again this year

4. Report from the Safer Neighbourhood Team

No crimes have been reported in Lidgate since the last meeting.

5. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13th November 2014

It was resolved that one amendment would be made to item 1 paragraph 4 - the word 'some' was inserted in front of the word 'councillors'. The minutes were then approved by the Council and the Chairman signed them.

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

The following actions are outstanding:

- Street lights number 3 and 19 which were reported after the last meeting are still not working. The Clerk was asked to find out when they will be repaired.
- Amendments to the war memorial. The PCC is awaiting confirmation that a resident is still happy to make a donation.

7. Finance

a) Payments made between meetings and approved by Chairman

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- Santander - initial transfer from current account to Santander account - LGA 1972, s111 - **£100**
- HMRC - second VAT overpayment - LGA 1972, s111 - **£1,348.45**
- Santander - transfer from current account to Santander account - LGA 1972, s111 - **£2,900**

b) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments

Online payments

- Adkins - playing field rent 2015-16 - LGA (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1976 s19 - **£100.00**
- Ousden Parish Council - rental of fireproof storage - LGA 1972, s111 - **£20.00**
- HMRC - PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 - **£126.60**
- J P Ince - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£13.17** and pay adjustment (difference between monthly standing order and correct monthly pay) - **£0.88**. Total paid **£14.05**

c) Authorisation for future payments of the Clerk's salary to be made online now that the standing order has been cancelled

It was resolved that all future payments of the Clerk's salary would be paid electronically. The standing order has been cancelled. The explained that she received two payments at the end of November as an online payment was made and a payment by standing order. One of the payments was refunded on 3rd December. C Morley checked the bank statement and confirmed that this was correct.

d) Checklist of Internal Controls

C Morley completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

e) Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting

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

f) Approval of the 2014 -16 National Salary Award for the clerk which includes a non-consolidated payment and a new pay scale payable from 1st January 2015

It was resolved that:

a) A non-consolidated payment of £10.80 would be made in January 2015 and a further £0.19 in April 2015.

b) The hourly rate for the Clerk's pay (SCP 27) would increase to £12.32

g) Letter from Barclays in response to the Council's complaint.

Barclays has sent a letter of apology in response to the Council's complaint about poor service at the branch in Bury St Edmunds along with a 'With apologies' payment of £100

h) Letter from the Pensions Regulator about automatic pension enrolment

The Council has received a letter from the Pensions Regulator with a guide to automatic enrolment. Employees with monthly earnings below **£481** have the right to join a pension scheme but there is no requirement on Lidgate Parish Council for automatic enrolment. It was resolved that no further action would be taken as the Clerk is already joined a pension scheme.

i) E-mail from SEBC confirming that the tax base figures, which were sent with the precept forms in November, were approved with no amendments by full Council on 16th December 2014 - for information only

j) E-mail from SEBC confirming that the Government is not looking to impose Council Tax level referendum cap at Parish Council level for the financial year 2015/16 - for information only

k) E-mail from SALC about the new Transparency Code for councils with an annual turnover of less than £25,000

SALC has sent information about the new Government Transparency Code for parish and town councils. Under the new code parish councils with a turnover of less than £25,000 will be exempt from external audit though their accounts will still be subject to internal audit. The Code requires the following financial information to be made available on the parish council's website:

- All transactions over £100
- End of year accounts
- Annual Governance Statement
- Internal audit report
- List of councillor and member responsibilities
- Details of public land and building assets

In addition, draft minutes should be published no later than one month after a meeting and agendas published no later than 3 clear days before a meeting.

It was not clear from the guidance whether the Parish Council would be subject to external audit this year. The Clerk sought clarification from SALC who confirmed that small councils will have to be externally audited until 2017 when the current contract runs out AND comply with the transparency code this year.

8. Planning

a) DC/14/2444/TCA - Chilterns, Bury Lane, Lidgate - TCA notification - remove one sycamore

It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.

b) E-mail from SEBC re changes to National Planning Policy Guidance on planning obligations which has amended the threshold for contributions to affordable housing and tariff style contributions. As a result of the changes SEBC will no longer be able to request S106 contributions on new application for developments of 10 units or less - for information only

c) E-mail from Bidwells re appeal for Pippin Park

It was resolved that the Council would submit a response to the Planning Inspectorate reiterating its support for the Pippin Park application as stated in its response to the initial application made on 25th April 2014.

9. Report from Councillor Evans

Councillor Evans spoke about the following:

- SCC has given approval for Community Speedwatch Signs to be installed in Lidgate.
- A speed and lorry survey will be carried out shortly in Lidgate
- The Health and Safety Executive is still investigating the site near the bridge. Mary Evans was made aware of a recent accident near the bridge.
- The lease at Clare Police Station has expired. The Police and Crime Commissioner has arranged for it to be extended for a short time. There will be a meeting on 20th January about the future of Clare Police Station. The Police Commander would actually prefer all the police officers to start the day in Haverhill and has said he will not divert them to work in Haverhill if they are based there.

- Highways issues. A request for work on the Belt has been passed on to KMG, but Mary Evans is not sure as yet how high a priority this is. The Council said this stretch is particularly dangerous at the moment when it freezes over.
- Traffic Modification Order for Bury Lane. No signs have been installed yet. Mary Evans agreed to look into this.
- Funding for swings. She will not be able to make a donation out of her locality budget in this financial year, but may be able to use some of next year's budget.

10. **Playing field issues**

a) **Moles on the playing field**

The Council has received two quotes, however one councillor said that the moles are coming in from the fields. It was resolved that C Bliss would speak to Tim Cox about the problem and a possible solution

b) **Quote for swings**

The Council has received a quote from Handmade Places of £3,175+ VAT for a double flat swing including installation and safer grass matting. It was resolved that any decisions would be postponed into the next meeting and that the clerk would investigate the possibility of shared procurement with Gt Barton Parish Council.

11. **Highways/Rights of Way issues:**

a) **Progress of the footpath map for Lidgate**

It was resolved that this item would be postponed until the spring as the footpaths are too wet at the moment.

b) **E-mail from a resident about the damage to Bury Lane following a recent shoot.**

The Council has requested that the signs restricting vehicle use on the stretch covered by the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) are installed as soon as possible. Once the signs are in place, action can be taken to report vehicles and any damage caused by them. Any vehicles (excluding farm vehicles) breaking the TRO should be reported to the Police by ringing 101. It was resolved that details of the TRO would be included in the newsletter once the new signs have been installed.

b) **E-mail from Suffolk County Council about possible changes to the Ipswich to Peterborough rail service which may result in a reduced service.**

It was resolved that the Council would write to the Rail Minister Claire Perry saying it is against any changes which will lead to further erosion of the current rail service.

12. **Update on the progress of the village housing questionnaire**

Kevin Marshall has sent a draft questionnaire. Councillors discussed it and made some amendments as it was felt that some of the questions were too leading. C Morley agreed to draft the introductory statement. It was resolved that the Council would look at making an individual approach to residents once the forms have been printed and that this item would be discussed further at the next meeting.

13. **Approval of a Data Protection Policy for the Council**

It was resolved that the Data Protection Policy would be e-mailed to councillors and discussed at the next meeting.

14. **Parish Council elections on 7th May 2015**

SEBC will be holding free elections training mid Feb to which clerks and councillors will be invited. Nomination forms will be given out then. Three councillors (C Bliss, J Whitefield and C Morley) said they would be happy to step down if new candidates come forward. L Gilmour agreed to stand again.

It was resolved that information about the elections would be included in the next newsletter.

15. **To confirm the dates of meetings from May 2015 - March 2016**

It was resolved that the following dates would be approved:

- Thursday 21st May 2015 (This is the third Thursday in May because of the election) Annual Meeting of the Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting
- Thursday 16th July 2015 (This is the third Thursday in July)
- Thursday 10th September 2015
- Thursday 12th November 2015
- Thursday 14th January 2016
- Thursday 10th March 2016

15. **Correspondence**

a) **E-mail from UK Power Networks about their vulnerable customer register for people who may need extra support during a power cut**

It was resolved that details would be included in the next newsletter.

c) **E-mail from SALC about the Government's Automatic Precept Referendums consultation which is looking at whether parish councils should be subject to precept referendums in line with larger councils.**

It was resolved that no response would be submitted.

- d) Letter from NALC about the new Local Council Award Scheme will be launched on 6th January 2015 and will replace the Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme.**

The Council has registered for the free one year Foundation Level Status in the new scheme. It was resolved that the Council would review the situation in six months time and decide if it would take part in the new award scheme.

- e) Letter from the New Anglia Growth Hub giving details of their free face-to-face business support.**

It was resolved that details would be included in the next newsletter.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed(Chairman) Dated