

Langtoft Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26 March 2019
at Langtoft Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Andy Halfhide (Chairman), Brian Branch, Angela Brogan, Andy Hallam, Debbie Hallam, Roy Jackson, Yvonne McCulloch, Mike Thompson and Lewis Trickey.

In Attendance: Julian Tatam (Clerk), County Councillor Barry Dobson, District Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew but no members of the public.

92 /18-19 Open Forum

The meeting began with the open forum at 7.02pm but in the absence of any members of the public the open forum closed immediately

93/18-19 Chairman's welcome and remarks

The Chairman welcomed the County and District Councillors.

94/18-19 Apologies for absence

Colin Larkman; no news. Brian Brown; a prior engagement.

95/18-19 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman is a resident of Westfield Way; the planning application at 10 Westfield Way may be discussed. Cllr Trickey is an advertiser in Grapevine, the pricing of adverts is to be discussed.

96/18-19 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting

The approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2019 was proposed by Cllr Jackson, seconded by Cllr Thompson and agreed unanimously

97/18-19 Report from County and District Councillors and Police

D.Cllr Trollope - Bellew reported that she and D.Cllr Cooke had met with the Asset Officer from SKDC to view the Pavilion regarding the need for refurbishment. They are also collating responses from stakeholders regarding what future facility is required.

C.Cllr Dobson updated the meeting on Thurlby's progress with traffic lights on the A15. It might be that their pedestrian crossing can be modified to help assist the traffic joining the A15. It follows that a similar solution might be available for the A15 at Langtoft.

There was also a discussion on gritting and the potential to collaborate with local villages to lobby for Kings Street to be included in regular gritting, to be pursued after the election.

There was no report from the police.

98/18-19 Clerks Report

The report was presented – no questions. The Clerk is working on the setting up of a Facebook page for the Council.

He is also to follow up the issue of the conditions of the donation for the zipwire.

99/18-19 Report on Highways Visit

A group of Parish Councillors met with County Councillors Dobson, Davies and Perraton-Williams and Local Highways Manager Rowan Smith to look at the following issues around the village:

- A15 crossroads – and the potential for traffic lights. *Ongoing.*
- Puddles on the A15 by the pedestrian crossing. *Contractor will be asked to re-visit.*
- The access of Back Lane onto the A15. *Lincs Road Safety Partnership will consider signage and access*
- Passing places and traffic on verges on New Road opposite Gibbs Close. *Difficult to widen the road due to a BT footway joint box. Clerk asked to contact BT to request that they upgrade it.*
- Gritting of West End and Stowe Road by LCC – *subject to a review in summer 2019.*
- Accidents at Stowe Crossroads – *alerting them of the issue*
- Inadequate signage at Outgang Road and Cross Road junction – *being upgraded*

100/18-19 Working groups

Cemetery:

The group had met to tour the cemetery and discuss updating the rules.

It was noted that various paraphernalia is appearing in the memorial garden, making it untidy and more difficult to maintain. The Clerk is to write to the memorial owners to remind them of the rules and ask them to remove the stray items.

A motion to accept the revised rules, which include the ability to have sloping tablets in the memorial garden was proposed by Cllr D Hallam, seconded by Cllr Branch and agreed unanimously.

Amenities:

Cllr Jackson has met with Fenland Leisure to look at the work required on the play equipment at East End Park. A quotation will be sent to the Clerk.

The policy of gritting of the village had been queried by Rowan Smith during the highways visit. The Chairman is reviewing emails from 2010 when consent was obtained from LCC Highways.

Penfield Nature Reserve (Pocket Park):

The transfer of the land has been held up by a dispute between Hansons and the neighbouring farmer regarding the control of rabbits. These need to be resolved before the village can take over. The remaining legal issues are close to conclusion.

101/18-19 Finance

Year to date accounts. The accounts to 21 March had been circulated to all councillors, including all transactions to date. The balances at that date totalled £19,473cr.

There are a number of payments to go out before the financial year end and the expectation is that the closing balances will be about £16,758, a surplus of £558 for the year. This is £6200 better than budget; the main savings being about £3000 on gritting (mild winter), £2000 on Penfield (transfer awaited) and £1800 for grasscutting and hedge trimming (dry summer). We have committed to £890 of expenditure on tree pruning to take place in April.

Earmark Reserves for Penfield Nature Reserve

A sum of £2000 is in the budget to cover the initial take over costs for Penfield but has not been spent as the transfer has been delayed.

A motion to earmark £2000 of reserves to be used for future Penfield expenditure was proposed by Cllr Brogan, seconded by Cllr A Hallam and agreed unanimously.

Membership of LALC

There was a brief discussion on the benefits of membership of LALC and agreed to renew for 2019/20 without a formal resolution.

Cemetery Fees

The maintenance of the cemetery is a significant net cost to the village, being reflected in the precept.

The fees were increased 12 months ago and a motion to increase the fees by a further 50% for new enquiries from 1 April was proposed by Cllr Trickey, seconded by Cllr Branch and agreed unanimously.

Pricing of advertisements in The Grapevine

The cost of publishing The Grapevine is offset by paid adverts, but there is still a net cost, averaging over £1500 a year over the past 3 years.

Colour printing can now be obtained cost effectively and should justify an increase in advertising prices.

A motion to increase fees to £20 for a half page and £30 for a full page for a single edition, £100 and £150 respectively for an annual subscription of 6 editions was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Branch and agreed unanimously.

The rules on the number of free adverts for village organisations will be revisited.

It was also agreed that we hold a formal tender for printing, with at least 3 suppliers being invited to quote.

102/18-19 Planning

PL/0126/17 Gravel Extraction at Tithe Farm

This planning application as been referred back to the Council after an updated transport assessment. As lorries will only access the site from the A1175 and not from the A15 via Langtoft, the Council does not wish to comment, other than that Footpath 5 will be bisected and should be diverted around the site.

103/18-19 Other Matters

Date of Annual Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting

This being an election year, the Annual (General) Meeting should take place within 14 days after 7 May. It was therefore agreed that the scheduled meeting on 14 May should be preceded by the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 21 May. Parishioners will be invited to attend to contribute ideas for projects for new Council.

Update of Grant Funding

Cllr Brogan has been in contact with Wendy Moore, LCC Grants Officer and a joint meeting is to be held, probably after the election.

LALC Clustering Questionnaire

LALC has circulated a questionnaire on attitudes to 'clustering' of parish councils, in part to achieve benefits of critical mass. The consensus was that we would not want to cluster with other parishes, but continue to work together on projects like the A15 and King Street traffic issues.

Rural Strategy Petition

Langtoft Parish Council

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Chairman's/initials/signature.....

The Rural Services Network is organising a petition calling for a Rural Strategy to set out the government priorities for rural communities for the next 10 years. A motion that we sign the petition in support of a Rural Strategy was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Jackson and agreed unanimously.

104/18-19 Date of next meeting

Next Full Council meeting: Tuesday 14 May 2019 at Langtoft Village Hall, following the Annual General Meeting which commences at 7.00pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.28 pm.