

Langtoft Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 20 February 2018 at Langtoft Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Brian Branch, David Hannen, Colin Larkman, Yvonne McCulloch, Derek Risk and Lewis Trickey.

In Attendance: Julian Tatam (Clerk), District Councillors Kelham Cooke & Rosemary Trollope – Bellew, County Councillor Barry Dobson and 7 members of the public.

101/17-18 Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman or Vice Chairman, the councillors appointed Cllr Branch to chair the meeting

102/17-18 Open Forum

The meeting began with the open forum at 7.03pm

Matters raised by members of the public included the following:

- Postponement of Pocket Park Meeting. *Why and where notified? Unfortunately the meeting had to be postponed as a number of key people were no longer available to attend. The postponement was advertised on the three Parish noticeboards plus the website.*
- Gritting costs and impact upon precept, as reported in The Grapevine. *Following an enforced change of contractor, the gritting costs have increased by 44%. £2335 was paid out in 2016 /17 with a relatively mild winter so the £3300 in the budget for the current year could be a challenge. The Council are seeking to control the costs of the gritting, restricting it to when there is a risk of ice.*
- Deepings Voluntary Car Scheme. *The recent donation to this scheme was challenged on the assertion that the scheme does not have any costs and therefore does not need funds. The Clerk refuted this claim: the scheme is currently funded by LCC but that funding is to be withdrawn. The costs include Disclosure & Barring Service security checks, public liability insurance, stationery and telephone costs, amounting to several hundred pounds a year. In a 10 month period in 2017, the service was used by 7 Langtoft residents a total of 58 times so this is a service which is used by parishioners.*
- Footpath 5 - Former footpath from King Street to Market Deeping. *County Councillor Dobson updated the meeting on progress. It is proposed that the path be diverted along the Environment Agency (EA) drain. The EA has been approached for their formal consent which is expected to be forthcoming. It will link with Footpath 1 and to the Peterborough Green Wheel.*
- 'Pull Ins' on and condition of New Road at the Gibbs Close junction. *This had been reported to SKDC in the autumn and the clerk had chased up since the previous meeting. It is with LCC Highways for consideration. County Cllr Dobson suggested that the residents log the potholes etc with LCC Highways on their website. The Clerk will continue to monitor for progress.*
- Plastic in the dike at East End Park. *Plastic and other rubbish from recycling bins has blown into the dike following the high winds a few weeks ago. Litter has also accumulated in the former pond at East End Park. The Council are in the process of recruiting a gardener cleaner who would be responsible for such tasks. In the meantime it hopes to organise a 'litter pick' involving local residents.*
- Cycling in East End Park. *It was stated that cyclists have been cycling through the former pond.*

- Traffic at The Crossroads. *Concerns were raised about the incorrect procedure whereby traffic (leaving either East or West End) turning right cuts across the traffic going straight on. Cllr Trickey (a driving instructor) confirmed that traffic turning left or going straight on has priority over that turning right, irrespective of who arrives first. He advised making eye contact with the other driver to understand their intentions as not all follow the regulations.*
- Proposed work at A15 crossroads. *This is a resurfacing project which will remove the potholes and hopefully alleviate the flooding issues.*
- Football Club. *A coach from the football club made a statement about his recent involvement in the club and the positive benefits for children. The football club wish to work more closely with the villagers to mutual benefit. They are working on improving and repairing their facilities but have been hampered by funding and some vandalism. Dog mess on the pitches is a regular problem.*

The Open Forum closed at 7.33 pm.

103/17-18 Chairman's welcome and remarks

The Chairman welcomed the County and District Councillors and the members of the public present. He also welcome Cllr Hannen to his first full Council meeting

104/17-18 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Halfhide, A Hallam, D Hallam, R Jackson and M Thompson: all away on holiday.

105/17-18 Declarations of Interest

None

106/17-18 To approve the minutes of the previous meetings

The approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2018 was proposed by Cllr Risk, seconded by Cllr Trickey and a majority agreement (those not present at that meeting abstaining).

107/17-18 Report from County and District Councillors and Police

District Councillor Trollope-Bellew reported that:

It will be about 4 weeks before the planning application for the football club is determined as the planning officer needs to visit the site.

SKDC is to participate in a project where it will retain 60% of the Business rates (with 40% to LCC) which would enhance income.

There is also to be a trial of a food waste collection service in SKDC though this will not initially involve Langtoft.

Each Ward Councillor has been granted £1000 to support local projects. Details to follow.

Lincolnshire Police have agreed a 5.8% increase in their precept which equates to an extra 23p a week for a band D property. This will allow the funding of 1100 regular officers and 120 PCSOs.

District Councillor Cooke reported that:

Invest SK, the business promotion scheme, will be supporting groups with grant funding applications. SKDC are not proposing to switch off street lights but will be converting more to energy efficient LED versions.

SKDC has set up its own trade waste operation, to supplement income and better utilise its own vehicles and staff.

A Head of Tourism has been appointed to boost this element of the local economy.

The Big Clean project will be maintained with planned quarterly visits to the towns in the district.

SKDC are installing electric charging points into some council car parks
Regarding the SEA for the playing fields, a reduction 50% has been agreed for next three years, commencing from the 2018/19 financial year.

County Councillor Dobson reported that:

He is still pushing to get Marc Jones (Police and Crime Commissioner), Nick Boles (local MP) and Richard Davies (Executive member for Highways) to a meeting in our locality to look at the traffic issues on the length of the A15 from Bourne to Deeping.

LCC have a fund of £1.7m to repair potholes. He encouraged the public to report potholes to make use of this fund and get them repaired.

PCSO Michelle Laughton forwarded a report that she had no incidents of note to report, only that fish sellers continue to pop up in all areas, these need reporting to the police. Apparently trading standards are very interested in the fish sellers.

Also, good news; a new PCSO named Rowena Everitt has been appointed. Rowena is shadowing Michelle for the present, but will then be on opposite shift patterns so there will be more coverage in the area.

108/17-18 Clerks Report

The Clerk's report had already been provided to the councillors, including a log of communications.

Key points:

Work had included correspondence on Pocket Park, obtaining cost estimates and planning for the proposed public meeting. LCC have signed off the restoration at Pocket Park so the Council expect to receive a formal offer by the end of April.

We have had a good response to the advertisement for replacement gardener/cleaner. These applications will be considered over the next couple of weeks.

109/17-18 Working groups

Events:

The event group met on 7 February and their report had been provided to the Councillors.

The charges at the cemetery have not been reviewed for many years and do not cover the costs of cemetery maintenance. Proposals will be brought to the next Council meeting.

Plans are in place for the next 'Meet the Councillors' day on 30 June

The date for the Parish Walk has been set for 6 June

Amenities:

The group met on 30 January and provided a copy of their report.

Consideration is to be given to replacing the broken seats at East End Park and removing the self-set trees and shrubs in the pond at East End Park.

It was recommended that the frequency and extent of grass cutting and gritting be reviewed before the next seasons commence.

110/17 -18 Finance

Year to date accounts. The accounts to 12 February had been circulated to all councillors.

The current balances total £22,037

The budget indicated a balance of £4,536 as at 30 March but given some underspends and delay of capital items the Clerk expects that the closing balance will be in the order of £14,000.

Appointment of a Councillor to verify bank reconciliations

The appointment of a Cllr David Hannen to verify bank reconciliations was proposed by Cllr Trickey, seconded by Cllr Risk and agreed unanimously.

Contingency Fund

The allocation of the £1000 contingency fund to gritting (in case of need) was proposed by Cllr Trickey, seconded by Cllr Risk and agreed unanimously.

Grass-cutting contract for 2018.

The quoted price has increased by 3%. A motion to agree the grass-cutting contract price of £165.25 per cut and £243.00 per cut for the hedge was proposed by Cllr Risk, seconded by Cllr Trickey and agreed unanimously.

Grapevine advertising prices.

We have been quoted a 5% price increase for the printing.

A motion to agree a 5% increase in the price for advertisements (rounded up to the nearest whole pound) was proposed by Cllr McCulloch, seconded by Cllr Risk and agreed on a majority with Cllr Trickey abstaining due to a potential conflict of interest.

A motion that we re-appoint Graytones as printers of The Grapevine, accepting their 5% increase in cost was proposed by Cllr Trickey, seconded by Cllr McCulloch and agreed unanimously.

111/17 -18 Correspondence:

An update on the new General Data Protection Regulations from LALC had been expected in time to discuss at the meeting. The regulations come into effect on 25 May 2018 and will require the appointment of a Data Protection Officer.

It is hoped that further guidance will be available in time for consideration at the next full Council meeting.

112/17-18 Pocket Park

There was a discussion on the timing for the proposed public meeting to discuss Pocket Park. Given the lack of availability of the Village Hall, the Clerk will enquire about the availability of The Church on Wednesday 7 or 14th March and confirm Councillors availability before re-launching the event.

113/17-18 Review and Authorisation of orders for repair and maintenance work:

New safety surface under the zip wire plus re-tensioning

Quotations to a replace the safety surface were discussed. The existing surface has failed in less than three years and rather than replace like for like at £1348 it was felt that a Fibrefall surface covering 40m2 (20m x2m) with a 5 year warranty at £3115 was a better solution (all prices plus VAT).

A motion that we accept the quotation from Fenland Leisure Services at £3115 (+VAT) for the Fibrefall and £300 (+VAT) for the inspection and re-tensioning was proposed by Cllr Risk, seconded by Cllr Trickey and agreed unanimously, though the Clerk was instructed to negotiate for a reduction for accepting both parts of the quotation.

114/ 17-18 Consideration of interim Council meeting to consider the appointment of a Gardener Cleaner

The candidates will be interviewed by Cllrs Halfhide, Risk and Trickey (with the Clerk in attendance) and, in view of timescales a recommendation be brought to an interim Council meeting.

A motion that we hold an interim Council meeting on at 7pm on 12 March to consider the appointment of a Gardener Cleaner was proposed by Cllr Risk, seconded by Cllr Trickey and agreed unanimously.

115/17-18 Dates of future meetings

Next Full Council meeting: 27 March 2018.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.58 pm.