

Langtoft Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 1 December 2015 at

Langtoft Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Brian Branch (chairman), Andy Hallam, Debbie Hallam, Yvonne McCulloch Derek Risk (vice-chairman) and Mike Thompson. Cllr Colin Larkman arrived at 7.10 pm.

In attendance: Heather Gilling (clerk), County Councillor Peter Robinson, District Councillors Kelham Cooke and Rosemary Woolley, and four members of the public. A further member of the public arrived later in the meeting.

The meeting opened at 7pm with the Open Forum.

82/15 Open Forum

Questions asked/matters raised included the following:

- Could parish council agendas be placed in the village hall notice board. *A representative of LVHMC indicated this would be possible*
- Concern that revenue for Grapevine advertising had dropped from the previous year.
- Is the parish council aware of its responsibilities under the Transparency Code. *The chairman replied this was on the agenda for this meeting.*
- Concern that passing places on New Road had not been established. *County Councillor Robinson and District Councillor Cooke referred to actions by their respective authorities to try to resolve this.*
- Concern that recent resignations of councillors are not viewed as being linked to recent matters regarding a former employee of the council.
- Concern regarding fly-tipping and a request to district councillors if action could be taken.
- Observation that lay-bys do not have litter bins

The Open Forum concluded at 7.25pm.

83/15 Chairman's welcome and opening remarks

In his opening remarks the Chairman invited members to agree to the suspension of Standing Order 1.1 (photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting) as this had now been superseded by an update to the legislation whereby it was now permissible for those attending meetings to use any means of modern technology to record and broadcast the content of meetings as they were happening.

84/15 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

85/15 Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

86/15 Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2015

The minutes were approved, subject to amendments being made to take account of comments made by former councillors regarding item 76/15 – site meeting regarding a proposed footpath between the village and Pocket Park and 81/15 – discussion regarding further information to be supplied to the external auditors. Because the latter item referred to a former employee of the council it was resolved to take the item at the end of the agenda with the press and public excluded.

87/15 Reports from County and District Councillors and Police

County Councillor Robinson reported on various matters and highlighted that shortage of money meant that the county council was further restricted on what it could achieve but was doing its best to ensure services continued.

In response to questions it was suggested that the 30mph sign could be moved so that the entrance to the allotments would be subject to this limit.

Action: Members resolved to ask the clerk to progress this suggestion.

Other highways matters were also raised.

Action: Clerk to invite the Area Highways Officer to attend a future meeting of the council.

District Councillor Woolley spoke of SKDC's survey of trees throughout the district. A review of waste collections, especially as affecting schools and village halls was being undertaken. This may result in charges being made. The size of refuse bins was also being looked at.

District Councillor Cooke spoke about SKDC's community fund – a sum of money available for local projects. The Clerk had attended an information awareness session regarding this fund.

88/15 Co-option of councillors

There had been no applications to fill the current vacancies. Following a discussion the following actions were agreed:

1. **An item be placed in the next issue of Grapevine**
2. **An item be placed on the parish council's website**
3. **A press release be prepared for the local newspapers and community magazines.**

89/15 Finance

- a) Current financial position: The Clerk reported on the council's financial position including transactions since the last meeting of payments made (£3,004.71) and income received (£485). Bank balances stood at £10,203.07 (Unity Trust tailored account), £10,063.33 (Unity Trust deposit account) £338.72 (HSBC).
- b) Amendment of financial regulations to enable additional checks to be made regarding purchases from on-line suppliers: **Resolved: to add an additional clause: Internet suppliers accounts held in the name of the council and operated by the Clerk /RFO must only be used for council purchases. The use of any accounts held will be reviewed by a councillor on a quarterly basis.**
- c) The setting of the council's budget for 2016-17: A preliminary discussion took place regarding the budget for the coming year. It was noted in the current year there had been one-off capital projects such as the purchase of speed signs, dog waste bins, and refurbishment work to play equipment that would not recur so probably a precept figure of £21,300 would be about right for the coming year. **Resolved: a more detailed break-down was required for the next meeting.**

90/15 Standing Orders

Following on from the Chairman's opening remarks (item 83/15) the clerk reported that a review of Standing Orders needed to be considered to take account of requirements of the Localism Act, in particular, changes regarding members of the public and/or journalists being able to use modern technology and communication methods to report proceedings of meetings. This led to a discussion at which a number of members expressed concern that this could happen, and without necessarily obtaining permission beforehand it was resolved:

The Clerk to contact LALC to establish how other councils have responded to this change and what action may be taken if Members were not in agreement with this move. The Clerk to draw up a suggested protocol and also to report to the next meeting on other matters contained in the legislation. These included the following matters:

- **Publication of notes of meetings prior to their adoption as minutes**
- **Publication of financial transactions over £100**
- **Members Code of Conduct**

91/15 Planning matters

- a) One decision notice had been received since the last meeting. Detached garage at Park Farm Cottage. Langtoft Outgang Road had been approved
- b) A site meeting had been held at 47 East End, with the owner and his agent, attended by the Chairman and Cllr D Hallam to discuss the temporary diversion of the footpath between the property and East End Park. Both councillors were satisfied the diversion would be carried out sympathetically, would not impinge on the play equipment, and would be restored satisfactorily afterwards. It was resolved that the temporary diversion be approved.
- c) The Clerk advised that a formal resolution was needed in order that the Clerk could respond to planning applications in instances where the consultation period would expire before the next meeting of the Council.

Resolved: In instances where the consultation period for a planning application will expire before the next meeting of the Council, the Clerk, having circulated details of the application by e-mail or hard copy, is authorised to collate any views received by Members in order to respond to the planning authority by the due date. A copy of the response will be circulated to all parish councillors and ward/division councillors of the relevant principal authority.

92/15 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on a meeting which she and the Chairman had had with Hanson's Land and Planning Manager, Brian Shaw, who with the local manager had taken on a tour of the quarry, explaining its operations and those of its sister company the Asphalt Company. They had also viewed Pocket Park which it is hoped will be handed over in the spring. On the matter of unauthorised lorry movements through the village, Mr Shaw advised to take note of times, direction of travel and in possible registration numbers as this was the only way the matter could be followed by with the drivers.

The Clerk also reported that the request to the developer of new homes at Cloven Ends had been successful with £500 to be offered towards play equipment.

At the end of this item, at 9.27 pm, it was resolved to suspend Standing Order 1y to enable the meeting to continue beyond the statutory two and a half hour duration.

93/15 Working groups

The Chairman invited members to consider whether the current arrangements for working groups continued to be effective, given the present situation regarding councillor vacancies. After a short discussion members considered, on balance, that there continued to be of value, particularly those dealing with events, amenities and highways matters.

Cllr McCulloch showed members the Christmas cards, produced from the design, judged the winner of an art competition at Langtoft Primary School. The cards would be sent to helpers, in particular Grapevine distributors.

94/15 Exclusion of the press and public

In view of the confidential nature of business to be transacted in the next item, relating to a former member of staff, the meeting resolved to exclude the press and public. Members of the public were thanked for their attendance.

95/15 Further correspondence with external auditor

- a) Further letter to the external auditor. The Chairman referred to a discussion at the meeting on 20 October at which it had been suggested that a further letter be sent to external auditors Grant Thornton, providing additional information regarding a matter that had been the subject of the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 21 August. A draft letter, previously circulated to Members by the Clerk was distributed, and subject to some minor adjustments to the text **it was resolved that the letter be sent to the external auditor.**
- b) Amendments to items 76/15 – site meeting Pocket Park and 81/15 – discussion regarding further information to be supplied to the external auditors. Members discussed feedback that these notes had not totally reflected the discussion and proceedings. In respect of item 76/15 former Councillor Jackson felt the note had not taken account of his comments that the land agent was someone new and not previously known to members.
- c) Regarding item 81/15 the note had not recorded that two councillors had left the meeting before the end of the discussion, one of whom subsequently tendered their resignation. A third councillor left the meeting at the end, verbally giving his resignation to the Chairman, which he followed up in writing. **Resolved. The Clerk to redraft the notes to reflect the proceedings and to present them for approval at the next meeting.**

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

96/15 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12 January 2016 at 7pm and then Tuesday 23 February 2016 at 7pm.

Signed:.....(Chairman)

Date:.....