

Langtoft Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20 October at

Langtoft Village Hall

**Present:** Cllrs Brian Branch (chairman), Andy Halfhide, Andy Hallam, Debbie Hallam, Roy Jackson, Colin Larkman, Yvonne McCulloch and Derek Risk (vice-chairman).

**In attendance:** Heather Gilling (clerk), and three members of the public.

The meeting opened at 7pm with the Open Forum.

**65/15 Open Forum**

Questions asked/matters raised included the following:

- The BT phone box which had been partially repaired should be removed altogether. *The Chairman replied that it is a valued local facility and not everyone has mobile phones.*
- Issues around the playing field including poor condition of the pavilion and anti-social behaviour/littering on the field. *The Chairman stated these matters would be raised with South Kesteven District Council/tenants.*
- No action been taken to repair boundary wall at the council houses, West End. *The Chairman replied this would be followed up with District Councillor Cooke who at a previous meeting had offered to look into the matter.*
- What happened to Langtoft's entry in the Best Kept Village competition. *The Chairman replied that it was thought the competition had not taken place this year.*
- Would it be possible to reinstate local village events such as the garden competition or annual produce show. *The chairman replied that it would be good to reinstate these events if there were people willing to come forward to help organise them.*
- Completion of the external audit. *The Chairman replied that it had now been completed and the appropriate information had been posted on the parish notice boards.*
- Will future internal audit information be fully reflected in the Council minutes. *The Chairman replied that this would be addressed.*
- Can Parish Council agendas be displayed in the Village Hall's notice board. *The Chairman replied that the question would be asked.*
- Could a profile of the Waggon and Horses be featured in Grapevine. *The Chairman stated the new landlord had been featured at the time they took over but there was scope to feature further information.*
- What revenue was received from sales of advertisements in Grapevine up until the end of the financial year ending March 2015. *The chairman replied that this matter was being considered, along with proposed changes in procedures following the appointment of the new Clerk.*
- Update on matters around Market Deeping Library and the campaign by the Friends of Deeping Library. (This speaker identified himself as District Councillor Ashley Baxter who represents Market and West Deeping.) *the Chairman thanked Cllr Baxter for his update.*

The Open Forum concluded at 7.30pm.

**66/15 Chairman's welcome and opening remarks**

Under his opening remarks, the Chairman expressed particular thanks to Cllrs Risk and D Hallam and the Clerk for their work on progressing matters needing urgent attention since the resignation of the previous Clerk.

**67/15 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Thompson and Garratt.

Under this heading the Chairman reported that he had received the resignation of Cllr Garratt. He read a letter which he intended to send thanking her for her work and asked that her excellent contribution to the work of the council be formally placed on record.

**This was agreed.**

#### **68/15 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs A and D Hallam expressed an interest in planning matter S15/2845/TCA/TC2.

#### **69/15 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2015**

The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting on 8 September 2015.

#### **70/15 Reports from County and District Councillor and Police**

Apologies had been received from County Councillor Robinson, District Councillors Woolley and Cooke, and PCSO Laughton, so there were no reports. All had asked that any relevant matters be reported back to them.

#### **71/15 Financial Report**

The clerk presented details of financial transactions made since the last meeting. Together these amounted to £2,157.25. Income of £125 representing cemetery fees was also reported.

The second half of the precept (£10,667) had arrived. The Council's reserves currently stood at £23,279. It was anticipated the council would end the year with a balance of around £3,000.

The clerk reported that she was now set up to receive on-line bank statements, but was still awaiting for the application to be able to process transactions electronically to be approved. She had had further correspondence and telephone conversations with Unity Trust on this matter.

#### **72/15 External audit**

The Clerk reported that the Council had now received the notice of conclusion of audit which had been placed on the parish noticeboards and were due to remain until 27 October 2015. The auditors had commented on two small matters – to note that the previous year's figures were 'restated' and that the five historical community assets in the register shown as 'nil' value should have a value of £1 each in line with NALC/SLCC guidance.

The Clerk reported that changes were due to be made to the audit timetable next year, regarding the changes to the provision for electors' rights. More information would be sent in March, but the changes, contained within the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 would mean the inspection period would be a single period of 30 working days which must include the first 10 working days of July. Section 1 of the annual return would need to be approved by the council before 30 June 2016.

In anticipation that questions were likely to be asked by members in respect of a matter reported to the auditors regarding the actions of a former employee, the Chairman moved that any further discussion regarding the annual should be taken at the end of the agenda, with the public excluded from the meeting.

**This was agreed.**

#### **73/15 Dog Waste bins**

The Clerk reported correspondence with Deeping Powerwash, the company which was offering to empty the dog waste bins. The company was willing to begin as soon as the bins were in place. The clerk had been asked to inquire how much the company would charge to empty the parish council's two general waste bins at East End. Their suggested £35 was considered too much.

**Action: The Clerk was asked to investigate possible alternative arrangements.**

## 74/15 Planning Matters

Application No: S15/2845/TCA. Felling of one sycamore and one Norway spruce tree at Church Barn, East End, Langtoft, within the Langtoft conservation area.

Cllrs A and D Hallam declared an interest in this application, but were invited to remain in the room in order to answer any questions that might arise.

Members agreed that felling of these trees was appropriate because they were close to and risked damage to residential properties and were pleased to note they would be replaced by more appropriate species.

Application No: S15/2696/FULL/PC1. Erection of 2 x two storey detached dwellings at 4 Tithe Farm Pastures, Langtoft. Members discussed this application and decided they needed further time to consider it. The clerk advised responses needed to be sent to SKDC before 4 November 2015.

**Action: Any further comments to be sent to the clerk before 4 November 2015.**

## 75/15 Clerk's Report

The clerk reported on the following matters:

Correspondence:

- i) A letter received from the Friends of Deeping Library who had written to neighbouring parish councils inviting them to include a sum in their precepts for the coming year to contribute towards the reinstatement of a library at Market Deeping. Langtoft was being asked to contribute £500. After a discussion **it was agreed this matter should be raised as part of the precept planning at the December meeting and in the meantime the clerk should obtain statistics of usage of the mobile library's visits to Langtoft following the closure of the Market Deeping Library.**
- ii) A letter from a parishioner referring to matters regarding the speed monitoring signs and offering possible solutions to alleviate speeding through the village. After a discussion **it was agreed the Clerk should reply to the parishioner, thanking him for his interest, and advising that the suggested solutions had been considered in the past, however, the council was keen to keep open discussions with the relevant bodies in order to reach a solution.**

Training:

The Clerk had attended a cemetery management course, from which it was considered appropriate to carry out an audit and possible review of the current arrangements for Langtoft. The Clerk had also attended a training session regarding Council finances and legislation which parish councils are required to work to.

Actions from previous meetings:

There were still a number of actions outstanding from previous meetings which were being progressed on a priority basis.

Website:

Cllr Risk reported that he felt a number of pages on the council's website had become out of date, and asked whether the council would wish him to contact a local resident who had previously expressed an interest in helping with proof-reading of Grapevine, with a view to reviewing the content and recommending any updates.

**It was agreed Cllr Risk should contact the local resident to make this offer, subject to changes being approved by the Clerk or Cllr Risk as webmaster, and responsibility for uploading material on to the website remaining with the council.**

## 76/15 Pocket Park footpath

The Clerk reported on a site meeting attended by the Chairman, Vice-chairman, Cllr Halfhide, Cllr McCulloch and Cllr Thompson, with the land agent representing Lincolnshire County Council, regarding the establishment of a footpath between the village and Pocket Park. This would be provided by the developer (Hanson) to a specification on which the Parish Council would be consulted, and once completed the footpath could be transferred to the Parish Council for the sum of £1. The Parish Council would thereafter take responsibility for future maintenance of the footpath.

After a discussion it was considered there was still insufficient information to be able to make a decision.

**During the discussion Cllr Jackson expressed concern that the land agent whom Members had met was not previously known to the council, and asked if further information could be obtained about his role.**

**It was agreed that further information be sought, and this should also involve Hanson, and Lincolnshire County Council's Chief Planning Officer. Clerk to progress.**

## 77/15 Gritting contract

The Clerk reported on the limited amount of work undertaken so far in setting up the contract regarding gritting of roads within the village for the forthcoming winter as it appeared that incomplete records were held. However, she had been in discussion with the contractors, LMR, who would be forwarding information to her. Councillor who held information offered to forward the material they held to the Clerk.

**It was agreed the Clerk should collate the information sent to her and progress the contract for the forthcoming winter.**

## 78/15 Updates from working groups

**Finance and General Purposes:** this group had not met since the last PC meeting.

**Events and Cemetery:** the church window had been decorated for Harvest Festival by Mrs M Baggaley. Flowers had cost £9.50. Designs for the Christmas Card, from Langtoft School were awaited. Cllr McCulloch was to liaise with the church which was looking to provide extra refreshments following the Christmas @ the Crossroads event. An audit of the cemetery layout together with a review of the current regulations was in hand. Repair of the cemetery gate was in hand and a request to have the path alongside the A 15 cleared was also in hand.

**Amenities and Highways:** members had discussed the need to establish a rota for rotation and charging of the speed reactive signs. Offers of help from parishioners were appreciated but health and safety and insurance matters needed to be investigated. Dog waste bins would be installed as soon as the contract for emptying the bins was in place. Issues regarding the SEA at the sports field, manor Way, remained unresolved. **It was considered the SEA should be a specific item at a future Parish Council meeting.** Members had discussed the arrangements in place regarding maintenance of fences along two sides of Black Bull Green and wished to recommend the council to obtain quotations for appropriate repairs. Volunteers were also invited for the passive speed signs and repairs to the front timber fence at East End Park.

## 79/15 Suspension of standing orders

During discussion of the Amenities and Highways working group it was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the vice-chairman and agreed by all present to suspend Standing Order 1y to allow the meeting to continue beyond the normal finishing time.

**80/15 Exclusion of the public:**

The chairman moved a resolution to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which would relate to named individuals. **This was agreed unanimously.**

**81/15 (cont.) External audit:**

Discussion regarding the further information provided to the external auditors continued.

Cllr Jackson asked that the minutes recorded thanks to Cllr Risk for his work in the preparation and submission of the information required to the external auditors.

There was a robust discussion regarding the additional information provided to the external auditors regarding a matter that had been the subject of the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 21 August. **The external auditors had asked extra questions which had been answered. However some councillors considered there was still further information the Parish Council ought to provide and asked that another letter be sent.**

**Cllr Risk left the meeting at 9.40pm. Cllr Halfhide left the meeting at 9.42pm and as a result of these actions the discussion did not reach a conclusion and the meeting closed at 9.45 pm with the intention that this discussion be resumed at a later date.**

**Following the meeting the Chairman received resignation letters from Cllr Halfhide and also Cllr Jackson.**

Date of next council meeting: 1 December 2015

and then: 12 January 2016

Signed:.....(Chairman)

Date:.....