

## LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Longham Parish Council held virtually at 7.30pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

Present: Cllr Sue Douglas (Chair)  
Cllr Phil Collins (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Donna McLeod  
Cllr Roddy McLeod  
Cllr Paul O'Brien

District Cllr Richard Duffield  
District Cllr Roger Atterwill  
County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris  
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Cllr Dye were approved.

### **2. To receive any declarations of interest.**

Cllr's Donna and Roddy McLeod declared an interest in item 7c. and will take no part in the discussion/decision.

### **3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

Cllr Collins proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Donna McLeod and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign the minutes in due course.

### **4. To receive an update re the vacancy for the parish councillor.**

The Chairman reported that she had received an expression of interest from a resident who was an active member of the community and it was hoped to co-opt at the next meeting in May. Given that there would be a further vacancy shortly, it was agreed to advertise the position in the Village Magazine.

### **5. Meeting open for public participation.**

There were no members of the public present but D/Cllr Duffield reported a complaint received from a member of the public regarding Bittering Lane, with mud from the pig farm and standing water making it virtually impassable. C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that he had today visited the site and spoken to the farm manager who would be cleaning the road the following day. Highways will also be asked to inspect as the grips and a culvert under the road also required clearing.

## **6. To receive County and District Councillors reports.**

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris had circulated a written report and this is attached. In addition, he was pleased to report that the Longham crossroads has been reprofiled which will make it much safer and easier to use. He had also requested an additional 'Give Way' sign at the Reed Lane crossroads which has limited visibility.

D/Cllr Atterwill reported that Breckland had now produced their Climate Emergency Strategy with the aim of being carbon neutral by 2035. A Community Green Grant Scheme is soon to be launched.

The Budget for 2021/22 has been set, with a £4.95 increase for a Band D property.

The partnership with South Holland Council has now ended but similar partnerships with local Councils are being considered, as the scheme initially worked very well.

D/Cllr Duffield reported that grants were available to businesses which were struggling in the current Covid climate.

There are staff retainment issues within the Planning and Building Control department and this is having an impact on inspections and enforcements.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors for their reports.

## **7. Planning issues:**

### **a) Applications for consideration.**

There were no applications for consideration.

### **b) Decisions to note.**

Council noted that a decision was awaited in respect of the following application.

- 3PL/2020/1456/F – The Old Rectory, Honeypot Lane - Erection of single bed annexe to The Old Rectory – Undecided.

### **c) To consider the following applications:**

Council considered the following two applications, which were both for extensions of current uses, and no objections were raised.

- Beeston with Bittering: Bittering Quarry (Plant Site), Reed Lane, Bittering, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 2QS: Continued use of land for the storage of inert processed secondary aggregate until 31 December 2022 without compliance with conditions 1 (restoration date) and 2 (approved documents) of permission reference FUL/2019/0030: McLeod Aggregates Ltd.
- Longham: Bittering Quarry (Longham Site), Reed Lane, Bittering, Dereham: Continued use of Recycled Aggregates Facility until 31 December 2022 without compliance with conditions 1 (planning statement) and 2 (approved documentation) of permission ref. FUL/2019/0029: McLeod Aggregates Ltd.

## **8. Highway issues.**

### **a) To receive updates on matters previously reported.**

- Speed Limit request – Litcham Road – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported he had met with the new Highway Engineer and the request will be investigated.
- Visibility at junction of Wending Road & Honeygot Lane – the C/Cllr advised Council that should the junction become overgrown then they were to report this to Highways, who were responsible for cutting junctions, albeit only one cut per year was now scheduled.

### **b) To receive an update regarding the pull-in on Hoe Road.**

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris had met with the Highway Engineer on site and this matter is now being investigated.

### **c) To consider any new highway issues.**

Council members were advised to report any new issues to the Clerk as early as possible.

## **9. The Playing Field.**

### **a) To receive an update in respect of the football pitch resurfacing.**

Council noted that works will commence when the weather improves and the site is dryer.

### **b) To consider the installation of a self closing gate at the play area as recommended in the play area inspection report.**

Council noted that the gate spring had been repaired by a person unknown and Council were grateful and considered no further action necessary. All the issues raised in the report have now been dealt with.

### **c) To consider any action in respect of recent hedgerow works.**

The Chairman reported on a query which had been received regarding works to trees along one side of the playing field. She had investigated and the tree works were not on playing field trees, they were owned by a resident. However, there are some branches which will be cleared up and the damage to the playing field will be repaired.

Council noted that this particular resident carried out a lot of tidying work on the playing field hedges and Council were grateful for that.

### **d) To consider any new issues.**

There were no new issues to consider.

## **10. To receive an update regarding the Clay Pits (a county wildlife site).**

Cllr O'Brien reported on urgent clearance works which had been carried out at the Clay Pits. Due to the current Covid situation, volunteers cannot be used and all of the Conservation Group are paid members. The current works amounted to £1,800, with a reserve fund of £2,750 available and Cllr O'Brien was seeking approval for an additional £1,800 plus £500 for materials. The site will be transformed, with access pathways reinstated and the steps reconfigured to make safe.

The Chairman reported that grant applications will be made for some of the works, such as signage and some access works. Once the site is under control, it will be easier to maintain in the future and it was hoped volunteers from the village would carry out much of the maintenance work, with a sum set aside in the budget each year for any other works which required a contractor. The site is important for wildlife, flora and fauna and it was hoped that local groups, including schools, would visit.

Cllr Roddy McLeod stressed that, now commenced, the project must be completed and maintained otherwise it was a waste of Council funds and Cllr O'Brien confirmed that he will see the project through to completion.

Members of the public are to be kept off the site for at least the remainder of this year and until such time as it is safe to visit.

Cllr Collins proposed that, in addition to the £2,750 set aside as a reserve, a further £1,350 be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Douglas and agreed by Council.

Cllr O'Brien agreed to leave any unnecessary works in abeyance until such time as any grant funding could be confirmed.

#### **11. To receive an update regarding the Village Hall.**

The Chairman reported that the Village Hall remained closed but will reopen on the 6<sup>th</sup> May for local elections. It was hoped that towards the end of May, some of the smaller groups will be allowed to meet again.

#### **12. To receive an update regarding the installation of a defibrillator.**

The defibrillator is now installed and registered with the ambulance service. A link to a YouTube instructional video has been circulated as face-to-face training cannot currently take place.

Council were grateful to the landlord at the White Horse for allowing the unit to be installed on the building. A notice will be put at the Village Hall indicating the location of the unit.

#### **13. Finance and Governance**

##### **a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2021.**

Council noted the financial report.

##### **b) To consider any charitable donations.**

Council agreed not to make any additional charitable donations this year.

##### **c) To authorise financial payments as set out below.**

Cllr O'Brien proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Douglas and agreed by Council.

- Clerk – Salary/Allowance (Feb/March)/Expenses      £319.68
- Defibrillator & Cabinet      £1729.20 (paid 27.1.20)
- Mole Removal from Playing Field      £129.60 (paid 29.1.21)

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • ICO (Data Protection)             | £35.00 (direct debit) |
| • Defibrillator Installation        | £120.00               |
| • Clay Pit Restoration              | £3,000.00             |
| • Financial year 2021/22:           |                       |
| • Website Renewal (refund to Clerk) | £98.86                |

**14. Correspondence for circulation**

Council noted the correspondence but no actions were required.

- Email from NALC re Extension of Regulations to hold Virtual Meetings & Date of 2021 Annual Meetings.

**15. To receive any new items for the next agenda.**

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

**16. To note the Annual Meeting of the parish council will be held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021, following the Annual Parish Meeting being held at 7.30pm.**

Council noted the date of the annual meetings and the meeting then closed at 8.27pm.

Signed:

Date:

## **County Councillor for Necton and Launditch Report March 2021**

### Budget:

The County Council set the budget for 21/22 at the February meeting. As related in previous reports the general council tax has been raised by 1.99% and the adult social care part of the tax has been increased by 2%. There is significant pressure on the budget through growth in demand especially in adult social care and making over £18m provision for short term Covid 19 pressures. However, the budget represents a continued sustained investment in maintaining and strengthening the councils key services while simultaneously providing the maximum possible resources to address ongoing Covid 19 costs which are expected to continue into 2021/22

Included in the budget is £400k to be spent on renewal and expansion of local footpaths as well as a further £495k over the next 3 years on the Greenways project to which will benefit the health and wellbeing of Norfolk residents.

Members personal budget has been increased from £6k to £10k and as well as small highway improvements can also be used to support environmental projects.

### Highways:

At last, a new highway engineer has been appointed and he started work last week. I have planned to escort him around my division next week to impart some of my local knowledge as he does not know this part of Norfolk. Another 2 members of staff have also been recruited to the highways team for this area so there is now a full complement of inspectors and technicians.

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