

WEST DEEPING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 AUGUST 2020

PRESENT:

Parish Council

Cllr Colin Blagrove – Chair
Cllr Maggie Ashcroft (items 1-5 only)
Cllr Sue Latham
Cllr Stephen Snell (item 8 onwards)
Cllr David Ward

Mr Ian Coles – Clerk

Cllr Ashley Baxter, Mr Paul Bragg

Cllr Colin Blagrove welcomed everyone to this online meeting which was arranged following the cancellation of the meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday 22nd July 2020. A risk assessment was conducted prior to the meeting to ascertain if it was possible for us to meet in the village hall again but, in accordance with guidance provided to us by the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), it was felt that it would be preferable for it to be held remotely.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. OPEN FORUM

There were no matters raised at this meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mr Ian Coles declared an interest for agenda item 13 – Finance – where the subject of clerk pay is being discussed.

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020, previously circulated, were agreed unanimously as a correct record. They were proposed by Cllr Sue Latham, seconded by Cllr David Ward and signed by the Chairperson.

5. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Maggie Ashcroft and Mr Ian Coles have arranged the purchase of additional dog bin bags and these have now been received and provided to Andrew Pickering.

Cllr Stephen Snell has prepared risk assessments for tasks carried out by residents on behalf of the Parish Council including the emptying of the dog bin bags and maintenance of the bus shelter. In addition, a further risk assessment for our parish council meetings has been undertaken, as referred to above. These were reviewed with Cllr Sue Latham proposing that they should be adopted and seconded by Cllr David Ward. It was agreed that a copy of these should be sent to our insurance brokers for their information and Mr Ian Coles will arrange this. Cllr Colin Blagrove thanked Cllr Stephen Snell for his efforts in preparing the risk assessments for us.

Mr Ian Coles confirmed that he has contacted Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to advise that we have rectified the potholes at the entrance to the Boaty as discussed at the last meeting.

6. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr Ashley Baxter provided a verbal report on various local matters. He confirmed that Aldi are looking at opening a store in Market Deeping and that there are proposals for a waterski training centre to be built near Barholm, although it is not thought that there will be any implications for our sewage issues as a result of this.

7. SEWAGE PROBLEMS

At our February 2020 meeting, we had an open forum to raise concerns and issues with Matthew Moore, Customer Liaison Manager of Anglian Water. Following the meeting, we drafted a summary in the form of Action Points which was agreed and forwarded to Matthew for Anglian Water to deal with. There had been no action by the time of our meeting in May 2020 due to lockdown and Mr Ian Coles has tried to contact him again on several occasions since for an update. Whilst an acknowledgement of this request has now been received, details of proposed actions are still awaited and Mr Ian Coles will continue to pursue this.

Cllr Colin Blagrove confirmed that copies of two further letters had been sent to him from our MP, Sir John Hayes: the first in May 2020 from Karen Bradford, Chief Executive SKDC stating that she is aware of our concerns and acknowledged that AW is engaging with us. The second in August 2020 from Andy Gutherson, Executive Director of Place at Lincolnshire County Council stating that he is aware of drainage issues in the village and that additional funding has been made available to investigate this to see if the system capacity can be increased. Independently, Mr Ian Coles advised that we had been contacted by a resident on this matter and we are also liaising with Anglian Water on their behalf. It was agreed that Cllr Colin Blagrove and Mr Ian Coles will liaise on a response to Sir John Hayes and confirm that we are still awaiting for a response from Anglian Water.

We have been advised by Highways at LCC that there will be traffic restrictions in the village between 7th and 9th September 2020 as a result of work being undertaken by Anglian Water. Mr Ian Coles investigated this with Anglian Water and has been advised that it is due to a new connection for a private property as opposed to being relevant to the surface water / sewage issues.

8. MINERAL EXTRACTION

At the last meeting, it was raised that Breedon may soon submit a planning application for mineral extraction for the area of land south of the King Street/A1175 junction (known as MS29). It was agreed that a working party should be set up to discuss how the area should be restored once minerals have been extracted. Cllr Colin Blagrove reported that the working group had met twice since the last meeting and had sought advice from land owners at Molecey Estates (Graham Magee and Glenn Fuller), South Lincolnshire Fenland Partnership/ Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (Amanda Jenkins) and the Historic Places Manager at LCC (Ian George). From these discussions, our aspiration is that the area be restored to the benefit of the local community, including: retaining public access to the right of way, a 'Heritage Trail', nature conservation and a green open space nearest the village. However, it was felt that the working group could only publish its views with the agreement of the other land owners – Tinsley Estates and LCC. Cllr Colin Blagrove confirmed that he had contacted Robert Woodfield of Tinsley Estates to seek their views on our aspirations. He had been advised that any meeting now would be premature but when the time is right Tinsley Estates will contact us. It was noted that Planning Services at LCC (Mr Adrian Winkley) had written to us in November 2017 to confirm that they will encourage the site operator (then Cemex but now Breedon) to engage with the local community before submitting a planning application. It was agreed that Mr Ian Coles should write to Mr Winkley to enquire to what extent our views on this matter will be represented. Discussions also took place as to whether we required professional input with a 'visualisation' for the project. Cllr David Ward advised that he will contact Dawn Purves who may be able to assist us and he will endeavour to obtain an estimate of the cost of undertaking this for us.

At the last meeting, Mr Ian Coles advised that a resident had contacted him about an additional site for mineral extraction north of the existing Breedon and Cemex sites on King Street, towards Greatford. We have recently received a County Matter Application Consultation from LCC confirming this and comments are invited by 3rd September 2020. Subsequently, Cllr Rosemary Trollope-Bellew has advised that she has arranged for a meeting to take place on Wednesday 2nd September 2020 for all local parish councils and Cllr Maggie Ashcroft will be attending this on our behalf. Cllr Colin Blagrove and Cllr David Ward expressed their views on this matter with particular concern focused on the impact at the junction of King Street and the A1175 and both agreed to provide comments to Cllr Maggie Ashcroft in advance of the meeting next week prior to sending our co-ordinated response.

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

We have been advised by Tallington Parish Council that they are proposing a bypass for Stamford which will run from the A1 to the A15, joining the existing A1175 east of West Deeping. Cllr Maggie Ashcroft and Cllr David Ward have both attended online meetings with them recently and a further meeting has been arranged shortly which Cllr David Ward will also attend. In the aforementioned letter from Andy Gutherson (section 7), he enclosed an extract of discussions between LCC and Network Rail summarising the latest position regarding the Tallington Crossing and that, following a study they had undertaken, the estimated cost of closing all railway crossings between London King's Cross and Doncaster was up to £400 million. The summary concludes that *Network Rail seeks to close the crossing ... when the opportunity is available.*

We have been notified by Highways at LCC that the bridge to the south of the village will be closed between 21st and 23rd September 2020 for maintenance work.

Cllr Rosemary Trollope-Bellew advised us that a LCC Highways Works Gang will be available to attend to village issues in September 2020 and we have provided them with a list of items for attention.

10. CEMETERIES

It was previously agreed that we would appoint Woodcraft Tree Services to cut back the sycamore tree at the front of the cemetery, prune certain yew trees and arrange for 6 – 8 lime trees to be topped at a total cost of £2,440, plus VAT. They have now confirmed that this work will be carried out in January / February 2021 with actual dates to be confirmed in due course.

Cllr Colin Blagrove has previously raised the issue of the church wall which needs to be repaired and that, following quotations received, Helpston Masonry would be our preferred contractor. They have quoted £2,810 for repairing both sides of the main entrance and £1,730 for work on the wall to the west of the side gate. Cllr Colin Blagrove confirmed that we have now received Church of England approval for the work to be carried out. We had applied for a grant from the Allchurches Trust towards the overall cost but this has been unsuccessful. Following discussions, it was agreed that we would put this on hold until FY 2021/22 and 2022/23 given other priority work required in the cemetery and Mr Ian Coles would contact Helpston Masonry to advise them.

The metal gates at the entrance to the cemetery have been made safe by Mr Dick Latham but there is still repair work to be done and we have obtained two quotations for these - £850 + VAT from B & R Fabrications and £300 from Gary's Gardens. However, the latter quotation does not include galvanizing and powder coating which Cllr Sue Latham feels is imperative after discussions with Dick. It was agreed that we should proceed with the repair as soon as possible after receiving an updated quotation from Gary's Gardens first which Mr Ian Coles will organise and then we will decide which contractor to use.

An e-mail has been received from Mr Alan Thomas who regularly visits the cemetery and has complained about the state of the cemetery gates and the cremated remains area. Mr Ian Coles has acknowledged this but will now contact him to say that we have authorised the repair of the gates and are obtaining a quotation (from Gary's Gardens) for tidying up the cremated remains area with consideration of erecting a hedge there as well.

There is a silver birch tree in the churchyard which needs attention and we have asked Gary's Gardens to provide us with a quotation for rectifying the problem with this.

11. GARY'S GARDENS

Mr Ian Coles has confirmed to Gary's Gardens that the owners of 36 King Street have moved the bee hives which were situated close to the cemetery and were previously creating a problem with grass cutting in that area.

12. PLANNING

There have been several applications since the last meeting:-

S20/0728 – A three bedroom bungalow and integrated garage at 1 King Street which councillors have considered and raised objections to as it contradicted SKDC's Design Statement. Subsequently, planning permission was refused by SKDC on 2nd July 2020.

S20/0828 – Tree work at 45A King Street for which councillors had no comments or objections. Planning Permission was granted by SKDC on 6th July 2020.

S20/0836 – Tree work at 6 The Row for which councillors had no comments or objections. Planning Permission was granted by SKDC on 6th July 2020

S20/0839 – Tree work at 70 King Street for which councillors had no comments or objections. Planning Permission was granted by SKDC on 6th July 2020

S20/1078 – Tree work at 52 King Street for which councillors had no comments or objections. A decision on this is currently awaited from SKDC.

At the last meeting, application **S20/0535** had been received for a rear two storey extension and integrated garage for which councillors had no comments or objections. Planning permission was granted by SKDC on 16th June 2020.

13. FINANCE

The bank balances in our current and deposit accounts are £308.52 and £8,448.93 respectively. Since the last meeting, we have received £2.08 in bank interest, £432.50 from WD Charities in respect of charges related to the Tinsley Field, £30.00 from Tinsley Estates for the annual Boaty levy and £63.33 from HMRC as a VAT refund on expenditure in the 2019/20 council year. We have paid £798.50 to Gary's Gardens (of which £312.50 relates to the Tinsley Field and has been / will be reimbursed to us by WD Charities), our annual insurance premium of £347.05, purchase of dog bin bags and delivery of £49.32, a voucher for the internal auditor for £25.00 and £250.00 for clerk fees.

Cllr Colin Blagrove confirmed that it had been brought to councillors attention that the National Association of Local Clerks (NALC) publish pay scales for parish clerks and that we are obliged to comply with these and other requirements of employment law. At present, it appears that this is not the case. Independent research indicates that we are out of line with most of our neighbouring parish councils and that is something that we need to address. For a parish council of our size, our clerk should be paid at a scale level of LC1 which is currently £10.16 per hour. Mr Ian Coles has been preparing monthly timesheets since 1st April 2020 confirming the number of hours worked each day and it was unanimously agreed that we should correct the position from that date. Currently, payments are made on a self-employed basis but it was also agreed that, in future, they should be paid monthly in arrears by PAYE and we will therefore register as an employer with HMRC in order to do so. It was also suggested that the clerk's terms of engagement should be reviewed with a contract of employment to be agreed. Cllr Colin Blagrove and Mr Ian Coles will liaise regarding this and advise further at the next meeting.

Mr Ian Coles updated the meeting on the budget figures previously prepared and confirmed that these costs will be incorporated in projections for the 2021/22 year onwards. All other aforementioned expenditure has been prioritised and agreed by councillors and will be also be reflected in these figures as and when necessary.

14. WEBSITE

LCC have been updating their website and Cllr Colin Blagrove, Cllr Maggie Ashcroft and Mr Ian Coles have attended recent online training sessions regarding these. LCC expectation is that parish councils will manage the migration to the new website. There appears to be a substantial amount of work involved in transferring information across from our current website and Cllr Colin Blagrove suggested that we may need to engage a website designer in order to do so effectively before the deadline date of 31st December 2020. He will prepare a summary of the work required and circulate it to councillors for further discussion. To meet the deadline, it was decided that the activities required to migrate the website would be agreed by email and initiated before the next meeting.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr Ian Coles advised that he had been contacted by Richard Astle of the Langdyke Countryside Trust regarding the development of parish nature recovery plans. It was felt that this might be relevant to the MS29 gravel extraction project and it was agreed that IC should acknowledge his e-mail and invite him to a future working party meeting.

Mr Ian Coles also mentioned that Nick Riches of the Environment Agency has contacted him regarding access to the Tinsley Field to cut the weeds along the Welland millstreams which has now been organised.

Information has been put on our village notice board from SKDC about a Public Consultation for Public Space Protection Orders. This mainly concerns issues such as dog exclusion and alcohol free zones and it was felt that if any residents had any concerns on these issues, they should contact SKDC directly using the details shown.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Sue Latham mentioned that there is a big pothole in the area in front of 10-13 King Street which needs attending to. It may be possible to use 'Fix My Street' for this and Cllr Colin Blagrove will liaise with her to do this.

Mr Ian Coles confirmed we have been notified that we can now hold Annual Parish Meeting online if we wish to do so. It was agreed that we would not do so at present but will review this in due course.

Cllr Colin Blagrove wished for thanks to be noted to Alison Ireland for organising the Lending Library in the church entrance, all those who have generously donated to Deepings Foodbank through the box in the church entrance and Alan Crowson for his work in the churchyard.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18th November 2020, starting at 7.30 p.m. A risk assessment will be conducted nearer the time to ascertain if this can be held in the village hall or if it will be an online meeting.

A provisional date of Wednesday 10th February 2021 was agreed for the subsequent meeting, to be confirmed in due course.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.12 p.m.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____