

LYDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held in Lyddington Village Hall
on Wednesday 7 May 2008 at 19:30

Present: Cllr H Tassell (Chairman) Cllr A Marshall
Cllr I C Canadine Cllr E L-A Straw
Cllr R H Clarke Cllr D P Sugden
Cllr S G Griffiths-Baker
Ms E A Hobley (Clerk)

Members of the village in attendance: None

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Questions and comments from the floor: None
2. Apologies: None.
3. Declaration of Interests: There were no interests to declare.
4. Election of Chairman: Cllr Tassell stepped down as retiring Chairman. After due and careful consideration, Cllr Tassell was proposed, and unanimously re-elected, as Chairman of the Parish Council until the next Annual Parish Council Meeting to be held in May 2009.
5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 March 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. Matters Arising: The Council considered the schedule of matters arising from previous meetings.
 - 6.1 Allotment Plots: Noted that all of the plots, except for number 1 (allocated to the Lyddington pre-school), are in the process of being cultivated. Concerns were raised that the weeds on plot number 1 will cross-seed to the other plots unless dealt with quickly. All subscriptions for 2007 have been paid apart from for the pre-school.
 - 6.2 Community Gardening Project: Noted that nothing further had been received from Ms Farrell on this project. The Council reflected that the playing field is for the benefit of the village as a whole and, as such, it is under a duty to ensure that any area given up for a project like this benefits the community as a whole and not just a subsection, or those external to the village. It was understood that the majority of the pre-school children live outside the village and it was therefore **agreed** not to proceed with this matter.

Actions:

 - Establish whether the pre-school still wish to take allotment plot number 1 and, if so, ask them to clear the weeds and remind them of the outstanding subscription for 2007 (**Clerk**)
 - Draft a letter to Ms Farrell, explaining the Council's decision not to proceed with the Community Gardening Project for the reasons specified (**Clerk**)
 - 6.3 Historical Parish Records: Cllr Sugden had passed the items for safe custody to the Clerk for lodging with Barclaysafe. **Agreed** that the rest of the documents, currently held by Cllr Sugden, should be lodged at the Leicester Records Office with the other Parish records, as they are kept in the right conditions and are easily accessible. Further agreed that the Parish Chest, as a village artefact, should be housed (empty) in the Village Hall once renovations are complete. There is no need to redo the lock at this stage.

Actions:

 - Lodge documents for safe custody with Barclaysafe (**Clerk**)
 - Pass remainder of documents to Cllr Canadine for lodging with the Leicester Records Office (**DS, ICC**)
 - Check with Village Hall Committee about housing the empty Parish Chest in the Village Hall (**ES**)
 - 6.4 Planning Applications: The issue of retrospective planning applications was discussed. At the special meeting held recently at Catmose, Rutland County Council's Planning Department explained that this area is hard to enforce due to lack of support from the Government. The Department is also short-staffed at present. Noted, however, that it is a criminal offence to alter a listed building without planning consent.

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Action: Arrange a special meeting in June and invite Carolyn Cartwright, Senior Planning Officer at RCC, to talk to Councillors about retrospective planning applications for listed buildings **(Clerk)**

- 6.5 *Playing Field Charity:* Noted that the playing field is an asset of the Charity (of which the Council members are Trustees). Notwithstanding this, it was **agreed** it is acceptable for the Parish Council to pay expenses related to the playing field as the Charity's delegated administrator. Further noted, therefore, that the agreements governing the allotment plots should be in the form of licences given by the Council for the benefit of the village.

As the current Tennis Club Committee Chairman, Paul Smith, is due to be leaving the village shortly, the management of the Tennis Club was discussed.

Actions:

- Provide contact details for the three remaining Tennis Club Committee members to Cllr Canadine **(Clerk)**
- Investigate with the Tennis Club Committee the position with respect to the Tennis Club **(ICC, DS)**

- 6.6 *Grass Cutting:* Messrs Lawson and Stokes had kept the grass on the village green in good order while Mr Hickinbotham had been unavailable. The Council was grateful for their assistance. Cllr Marshall mentioned that the new RCC grass cutting contractor had started but had not cut all of the verges at Colley Rise. He also understood from RCC Head of Highways that they should cut up to the 30mph signs.

Actions:

- Follow up on whether the grass contractor should cut up to the 30 mph signs **(Clerk)**
- Keep an eye on whether the grass cutting contractor is cutting all areas it is supposed to **(all)**

- 6.7 *Litter Bins:* The two new bins had arrived to be positioned at the bus shelter and The Old White Hart.

Actions:

- Put the new bins in place **(ICC, AM)**
- Keep an eye on the emptying of the bins and report any problems to the Clerk or direct to RCC **(all)**

- 6.8 *Traffic in the village:* Noted that although there was an excess number of signs, the site traffic involved in the laying of the Anglian Water pipeline did not appear to have presented a problem.

The Speeding Working Group had met the previous week with a representative from Corby Borough Council to discuss the potential for increased traffic in the village due to the ongoing development in Corby (up to 5,000 new houses). It appears that the additional traffic through Rutland villages as a consequence of this development has not been considered.

There had been reports of excessive noise from Rockingham Speedway over the bank holiday week-end.

Actions:

- Collect more information on the potential increase in traffic connected with development in Corby and then write to Alan Duncan MP expressing the Council's concerns **(Speeding WG)**
- Establish whether Gretton Parish Council had received complaints about the recent noise at Rockingham Speedway and, if appropriate, look at submitting a joint complaint **(Clerk)**

- 6.9 *Electricity Project:* Noted that the land originally proposed as an appropriate site for the electricity substation was under new ownership.

The trees in Chapel Lane were growing dangerously close to the electricity lines. It was also considered that the subsidence of the surface of Chapel Lane is due to the work done by the electricity board.

Cllr Canadine reported that the recent power cuts had resulted from two separate faults. He had discovered that the electricity board is required to monitor only the main power lines and not the local distribution network. As such, they are obliged only to pay compensation from the time a fault on the local line is reported. Potential faults on the local electricity distribution lines therefore need to be reported as soon as possible.

Actions:

- Request RCC approach the new owners of the land on which the sub-station was proposed **(Clerk)**
- Ask the electricity board to trim the trees in Chapel Lane to give clearance for the electricity lines **(Clerk)**
- Contact electricity board about repairing the surface in Chapel Lane **(Clerk)**

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REGULAR REPORTS

7. Playing Field

Cllr Canadine reported that the rubber matting in the small children's play area was in reasonable condition. The horse chestnut tree overhanging the play area will now be dealt with in the autumn and re-turfing the area (rather than re-seeding, which will require the area to be closed off for a period) will be considered then.

Cllr Canadine had also provided a couple of extra bags of play sand for the sand pit and had mended the spring on the gate again. Noted that some of the wire fencing on the allotments had been pulled away by vandals.

Actions:

- Seek a quote to have the small children's play area re-turfed (ICC)
- Try paint stripper on the goalposts and if that does not work, obtain a quote for new posts (ICC)
- Mend the wire fence on the allotments damaged by vandals (SGB)
- Arrange to have the basketball net taken down/replaced (Clerk)

8. Planning Applications

8.1 *Schedule of planning applications:* Noted.

8.2 *Planning Applications that potential effect the whole village:* The Council is not obliged to consult residents on planning applications but it noted that it has a duty to ensure residents are fully informed of applications that may affect the village as a whole. Cllr Griffiths-Baker had considered whether it was possible to define those instances where the Council would consult the whole village on a planning application but it was agreed that the subject is too wide. The Council will therefore continue to consider each application on its own merit but, where it decides to notify residents, it agreed it must do so in an impartial fashion. It may, however, in addition to that impartial notification, separately share its opinion on the planning application with the village.

8.3 *Special planning meeting at Catmose:* Cllrs Canadine and Tassell had attended the special planning meeting held in April for all Parish Councils. The main items noted were:

- The Planning Department considers Parish Councils to be their local "eyes and ears" – structured responses, including local knowledge that assists the Case Officers, are seen as particularly helpful and are given more weight;
- Often the Case Officers write their reports in advance of the given deadline for response due to tight timeframes – if the Parish Council is likely to object to an application it should flag this as soon as possible with the Case Officer, followed later by its detailed comments; and
- Where comments are submitted, it is useful to copy the County Councillor.

9. Finance

9.1 *Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008:* The Parish Council's annual accounts for the financial year to 31 March 2008 were tabled and discussed. **Resolved that** the annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008 be and are hereby approved **and that** the Chairman is authorised to sign the balance sheet on behalf of the Parish Council.

9.2 *Current Financial Position:* A report from Cllr Marshall on the Council's current financial position was tabled and noted. The value of HBOS shares had fallen and therefore, in line with policy, the PC will continue to hold its HBOS shares for the time being. Considered and **resolved that** £4,000 be transferred from the PC's current account to its Treasurer's Account with the Halifax.

The Clerk tabled a schedule detailing cheques issued since the last meeting. **Resolved that** the cheques issued since the last meeting be and are hereby ratified.

9.3 *Clerk's Expenses:* The Clerk's salary for March and April 2008 was received and approved (a total of £279.21, being 35.75 hours at £7.81 per hour).

Action: Review level of Clerk's fees and put forward proposal for an increase, if appropriate (Clerk)

9.4 *2008 Annual Return:* **Agreed that** Mr Charles Tassell be appointed internal auditor for the year ended 31 March 2008, to audit the Annual Return required by the Audit Commission for submission to the external auditor.

Action: Complete the 2008 Annual Return and deliver to Mr Tassell for internal audit (Clerk)

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BUSINESS

10. Traffic in the Village

A letter dated 29 April had been sent to the Head of Highways at RCC, Malcolm Ainley (who retired at the beginning of May), asking to meet with one of his engineers on site to enable the Working Group to progress toward a firm proposal on electronic signs as a first stage and on the installation of speed tables as a second. Also **agreed** that the pathway from the village to Uppingham needs to be improved and that its neglected state should be raised with the Highways Department.

Training for the Community Speedwatch Scheme was scheduled to start on the first Wednesday in June with sessions starting the following week for four weeks. It was hoped to target the worst times of the day.

The speed calming measures near RS Components in Corby (raised cobbles) were considered effective and might be an alternative solution with village gates.

Action: Arrange site meeting with Highways Department to include County Councillor, if possible **(Clerk)**

11. Village Questionnaire

The results from the village questionnaire will be discussed as the first item at the next meeting with a view to creating a plan and identifying work priorities.

Action: Revisit results from questionnaire in preparation for discussion at the next meeting **(all)**

12. Standing Orders

Resolved that the revised Standing Orders for the Council relating to Contracts be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Action: Draft Standing Orders for the conduct of meetings for review and adoption by the Council **(Clerk)**

13. Burial Fees

Agreed that a review of the burial fees for Lyddington Cemetery should be considered.

Action: Circulate a schedule of burial fees showing a 5% increase in the current position **(Clerk)**

OTHER MATTERS

14. Clerks' Items

RoSPA: The annual safety check of the playground by RoSPA was due to take place in May.

15. Annual Parish Meeting

The draft agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Wednesday 28 May was **approved**.

Action: Advertise the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting as required **(Clerk)**

16. Village Newsletter

The village newsletter for May 2008 was **approved** for distribution.

Action: Arrange for printing and distribution of newsletter **(Clerk, all)**

17. Other matters *(at the discretion of the Chairman)*

Cllr Canadine had been elected to the Steering Committee for Rutland Community Council.

Action: Report back to the Parish Council from time to time **(ICC)**

18. The next meetings will be held at 19:30 in the Village Hall on:

Wednesday 28 May 2008 (Annual Parish Meeting)

Wednesday 2 July 2008

The meeting closed at 21:45

Signed by Mrs H Tassell, Chairman on 2 July 2008

Chairman