

Loxley Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held at Loxley School on Tuesday 12th March 2019 at 19:30pm

Present: Glynn Jones, Chair (GJ), Justin Whitehorn (JW), Dan Bake (DB), Ken Osborne (KO), Peter Gregory Hood (PGH), Penny O'Donnell (PO'D) and Izzi Seccombe (IS).

Apologies: Maria Garcia (MG).

Other attendees: Paul Jennings (PJ), Peter Morris (PM), Tony Tyler, Lynn Chetwin, Hazel and John Mills and Sarah Brooke-Taylor (from WRCC).

1. Record of members present and receive apologies

Glynn Jones, Justin Whitehorn, Dan Bake, Ken Osborne, Peter Gregory Hood, Penny O'Donnell (PO'D) and Izzi Seccombe.

Apologies : from Maria Garcia.

2. Declaration of interests in any item in the agenda

Three Councillors noted that they were members of the PCC. However, the PCC had written to the Clerk for 'dispensation' to participate in the discussion on the church contribution to grass mowing costs which had been accepted and was required in order for the Council to be chorate.

3. To approve the minutes of LPC meeting held on 15th January 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2019 were approved and could be placed on the website.

4. Matters arising from minutes of the last meeting not covered in the agenda

None.

5. Representations and/or questions from the public

a) Sales of the Fox Inn by Enterprise Inns

A number of residents were in attendance to discuss this item, noting that the Parish Council had registered the pub as a community asset. This had been done to provide some protection should the pub be offered for sale - which Enterprise Inns were now doing. The sale included the pub and associated land, plus the flat above the pub. The adjacent cottage was available for sale by separate negotiation.

PM and PJ were concerned that the village would lose a valuable asset. It was noted that the future of the pub was an issue for residents rather than LPC, they requested that that LPC hold a public meeting to gauge public interest in bidding for the pub. The meeting would provide an opportunity to: highlight implications of registering as a community asset, highlight experience elsewhere and identify community interest in putting together a bid.

IS stated that registering the Fox as a community asset would enable the community to bid to purchase the pub but that the sale would still go to the highest bidder. There were some lessons that could be learned by contacting Claverdon where a successful bid was made to operate the local pub.

PM thought that an interest would need to be declared by the 11th April and would provide six months to try and put a bid together, so would give the community a 'head start', but there was still the possibility of any community initiative being outbid. PJ raised the question of change of use, which IS thought a possibility but Enterprise would need to demonstrate it had been unsuccessfully marketed for 12 months. DB felt Enterprise would most likely strip out fixtures and fittings so that funding would need to be found for the purchase of the building and the fit out.

GJ noted that Councillors should focus discussion on i) whether this was an issue that LPC should lead on? ii) if so, who would lead this including responsibility for booking the school and advertising the meeting to the wider community? and iii) the success criteria for any community meeting organised would be the identification of individual(s) willing to champion the project going forward but that leadership would need to come from the community.

DB stated he would be willing to put a leaflet together advertising the meeting. GJ agreed to distribute.

Actions :

- **GJ to contact SDC and confirm process for putting in a potential bid**
- **DB to produce a leaflet (confirming timings, date and venue), which GJ would distribute**
- **LPC to attend community meeting as soon as this can be arranged – outlining issues to community and seeking involvement from residents to progress a bid**

6. District & County Councillors update

PO'D noted the following issues:

- SDC budget consultation – 90% residents thought SDC provide value for money. However, residents would like to see an increase in CCTV coverage
- Additional support is being provided for a homelessness project and Wellesbourne airfield CPO to protect the airfield from development
- Tomorrow there is a drop in session for site allocations
- Also noted scam relating to requests for bank details from SDC
- P'OD sits on a Task and Finish Group to prevent evictions by Housing Associations – one HA has a very high eviction rate (successful HAs provide coaches and other supportive policies) with knock on costs for SDC
- Work with rough sleepers – homelessness remains a top priority for SDC.

Izzi Seccombe noted the following issues:

- There have recently been a number of inspections:
 - Fire Service – pleased with report overall ‘good’ rating, areas for improvement relate to internal management
 - Youth Justice – good with outstanding qualities – and leading on regional policy development
 - Imminently expecting inspection on ‘educational special needs’ also a national issue – not clear what is driving growth here including more high cost provision for acute educational needs
- Waste another area of escalating costs; two district authorities now charging for green waste so some consumers putting this in recycling bins which adds to costs; children’s services other area of escalating costs.
- Also debating potential implications of Brexit for the Council
- A46 is now strategic route for Midlands Connect (regional authorities). Major strategic infrastructure is the A5 and just put bid in form Housing Infrastructure Fund.

7. Clerks Report

Casual vacancy update

GJ asked JW following the last meeting whether he had been able to make much progress in respect of appointing a Clerk to the Council. JW noted that the advertisement in the Grapevine had not achieved any response.

GJ had contacted Alison Gregory and had received a couple of names of individuals that would be willing to stand in temporarily as Clerk while the PC try and recruit a permanent replacement.

GJ suggested that the Council move to appoint a temporary clerk – Bill Robinson – who had indicated his willingness to cover the position. Bill was very experienced and has previously run training courses for Councillors on behalf of WALC. Bill’s experience would be invaluable – also over the next couple of months there were important tasks to be completed including :

- election of Councillors
- end of year finances
- and more generally it would be helpful to have an outside view from someone of Bill’s experience in relation to procedural and conduct matters.

GJ also noted that he had received a CV expressing (from Rebecca Weston) interest in the permanent role which he had circulated to Councillors. However, Rebecca lived in Cannock, Staffordshire and this did not appear to offer a long term solution given the distance involved.

Actions

- **GJ to contact Bill Robinson and offer Clerk role on an interim basis**
- **To confirm with Rebecca Weston why she was interested in the role**

To confirm payments & receipts:

Receipts :

£451.50 – church contribution to grass cutting

£0.55 bank interest

No payments since the last meeting

Chqs for approval at tonight's meeting

£24 school hire for NDP

£72 school hire for LPC

£455 grounds maintenance for play park

Bank Balances

Deposit account - £6,323.15

Current account - £20,560.66

8. Housing and Planning

a) Update on the Loxley Housing Needs Survey (SBT)

SBT (Rural Housing Enabler, WRCC) introduced this item. Report was undertaken in March 2014 and has a shelf life of five years. Excellent (43%) response rate was achieved. The analysis identified three households with a housing need. At November 2018 five households with Loxley address registered on the SDC housing waiting list. And seeing growth in housing needs more generally. SBT distributed housing survey to Councillors which has been amended since last survey in 2014.

All survey costs would be covered by WRCC but LPC would be responsible for the distribution of the survey pack (residents are provided with a freepost envelope and return to SBT), who also transfer the data – so the survey is anonymised. Within one month LPC would get a report and analysis of survey returns. Looking at all tenures – but restricted to people with a local connection.

IS noted that the on-going issue remained identification of a suitable site and the survey may lead to unrealistic expectations. SBT noted that she could re-approach landowners to see if they had changed their opinion. Councillors unanimously voted in favour of undertaking a follow up housing needs survey.

Actions:

- **LPC to organise distribution of survey work**
- **GJ to liaise with SBT this side of the summer break to organise delivery and advertise in the Grapevine. GJ to be in touch after the Easter break.**

b) Planning

GJ noted that the planning application from Rosconn - for the development of five homes on Goldicote Road - received planning approval. KO had met with Stephen Butt and WCC highways. KO noted that the highways officer had met with them for over an hour on site to address their concerns and note why they had granted the scheme approval. A separate note of this meeting had been drafted by Stephen Butt who had accepted the recommendations of the highways officer.

GJ had attended the Committee meeting to object to the Home Farm planning application. The vote had been split with the Chair abstaining but passed by a majority of Councillors.

c) NDP – approval of final plan and supporting appendices

NDP documents

Finalised documents had now been distributed to Councillors, including:

- The Plan including updated Village Design Statement
- Supporting appendices, including the outcome of the recent Regulation 14 consultation
- Basic Conditions Statement.

GJ noted that very little had changed in the Plan as most comments had been dealt with in the appendices and were not deemed materially relevant. Many related to the development on Goldicote Road which has received approval. The documents had been approved by LPCs consultant (Neil Pearce), who had also drafted some of the responses to the regulation 14 consultation. Hence there was little to discuss – GJ asked for a show of hands supporting LPC adoption of the finalised Plan. There was unanimous support for supporting the Plan.

Actions :

- **GJ and Wendy Gadd (WG) to submit finalised documents to SDC.**

9. Grass mowing

a) Quotes received for grass mowing

The Clerk had now received three quotes from:

- Thomas Fox - £2,000.56 for one year (3 years £2,105.40pa)
- Perennial Landscapes - £1,750 (based in Staffordshire)
- Limebridge - £3,465

Details had been distributed details on 28.02.19 with a recommendation to stay with Thomas Fox. GJ noted it made sense to agree the contract for three years given the time consuming nature of the tendering process.

GJ requested comments on the quotes. PGH noted that the PCC did not want more than eight mowings in the churchyard (as opposed to the 14 included within the quote). PGH agreed to speak with Thomas Fox.

Councillors unanimously agreed to a three year contract with Thomas Fox, subject to the changes required by the PCC in respect of mowing the churchyard which would be negotiated by PGH on behalf of the PCC/LPC.

Action :

- **PGH to speak to Thomas Fox and agree the basis for a revised tender by negotiating a reduced number of cuts for the churchyard. All other aspects to remain unchanged confirming contract length of three years.**

b) PCC contributions to grass mowing costs

The largest annual expenditure item continued to be grass cutting with a total spend of £1,872.50. Over half of this amount was accounted for costs relating to the Church (£903 for mowing the church yard, plus an additional c£376 mowing the Cemetery, totalling £1,279 (getting on for one-fifth of the Precept), with the contribution received relatively small (£300) in relation to the costs.

GJ had raised this separately with the PCC (writing to them to set out alternative arrangements available to closed churchyards). GJ noted this option available to the PCC to transfer the ownership and full liability of the churchyard to LPC (who in turn could pass this on to the District Council). PGH noted that this was something the PCC were reluctant to do. However, they had discussed costs and agreed that the currently significant contribution from LPC would be reduced with the PCC picking up the costs associated with mowing the church yard.

Councillors unanimously agreed to this change which would significantly reduce LPC ongoing grass mowing costs.

Action :

- **Going forward the PCC would cover the costs of mowing the church yard, with any residual costs covered by LPC.**

10. Council elections

GJ distributed election forms which for those Councillors interested would need to be completed and **RETURNED to SDC (Elizabeth House) by 4pm on the Wednesday 3rd April 2019**, at the latest.

Actions

- **Councillors to complete and return to SDC by 4pm on the Wednesday 3rd April 2019, at the latest.**
- **MG intended to stand down so a replacement would be needed, should no one volunteer.**

11. Playing Field and Play Area

DB has received quotes for the park benches and will email to Councillors – one hardwood, another from an internet company plus designs for disability inclusion. Also looking at recycled options.

12. Traffic Calming (KO)

Called Safety and Traffic division who will be in touch.

13. Correspondence

Clerks and Councils Direct distributed.

14. Any other business

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15. Dates of forthcoming Meetings for 2019/20

- Wednesday 8th May 2019
- Wednesday 29th May 2019 (Annual Parish Meeting)
- Tuesday 9th July 2019
- Tuesday 24th September 2019
- Tuesday 12th November 2019
- Tuesday 10th December 2019
- Tuesday 21st January 2020
- Tuesday 17th March 2020

Action

- **Circulate revised dates to Izzi Seccombe and Penny O'Donnell**

The meeting closed at 9.26pm.