

Loxley Parish Council

Annual Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held at Loxley School on 16th May at 19:30

Present: Glynn Jones, Chair (GJ), Justin Whitehorn (JW), Peter Gregory Hood (PGH), Dan Bake (DB), Ken Osborne (KO), Maria Garcia (MG).

Clerk : Samantha Thomas (ST),

In attendance: Izzi Seccombe and approximately 45 members of the public plus the School Head (Mathew Watson).

1. Welcome

GJ welcomes everyone to the Annual Parish Council Meeting for 2018.

2. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence

Apologies received from Penny O'Donnell and Jackie Parker.

3. Reports

A) School – Update received from Matthew Watson - Head

Matthew provided a brief update :

- Numbers – the school started this year with 39 pupils on role. The school's Pupil Admission Number is 42 children. There are some challenges ahead with pupil numbers and it is likely that the numbers in September will be significantly lower than over the last few years (although things change quickly at Loxley).
- OFSTED - The school continues to be a good school following the inspection in November. The following are few key quotes from the report:
 - You, other leaders and governors have made sure that the strengths noted at the school's last inspection have been maintained.
 - All members of staff who completed an online questionnaire agreed that the school is a lot better than it was before
 - There are clear strengths in leadership.
 - You have also built a strong staff team at Loxley. Staff said that they value the opportunities they have for professional development and that they feel trusted to take risks and take on responsibilities.
- The building work was finally completed in September. Many parents and staff have commented that *"the school actually looks like a school now."* The security of the school has improved and three external doors have been reduced to just one central door and this has down-lighting which remains on all night to add extra security. The internal corridor at the front of the school provides a much needed entrance lobby and Marie now has a proper hatch which means that parents do not walk straight into her office where they could see potentially sensitive information on her computer screen or on her desk. The Community Room/staffroom is considerably larger and with stacking chairs allows for specialists to use the space for physiotherapy work, withdrawal space and for larger groups of people to meet more comfortably.

- Forest School. Onside Coaching run our forest school provision on a Thursday afternoon. The children in each class spend five weeks at a time taking part in a range of activities at the field.
- We continue building links with the Divine Standard International School in Ghana. The children at Loxley have written their views about Loxley School and the children in Ghana have shared photos and their impressions of their school.
- Safer Schools. It is wonderful news that, with the considerable support of Graham Stanley and Councillor Seccombe, Loxley has been selected for the Safer Routes to School Programme in 2019-20 which will bring with it significant levels of funding to improve safety around the school and vicinity.

This is Matthew's last report to the Annual Parish Meeting as he is moving onto pastures new in September.

Q & A Discussion

“What will happen with the pot of money allocated for safer routes to school”

IS says she will go to the transport department for design and planning.

“With a view to do what”

MW explains that it will ultimately be safer for children to get to school.

IS gives a review of the county council, explaining that whilst the council has already made £92 million pounds of savings, there will be £67 million savings needed in the next four year cycle , she says we are now in year one of the new four year cycle. She would like to have 'let's talk roadshows' to find out what the priorities of the local people are, peoples main priorities usually are road safety and social care. IS would like to see more power given back to towns and parish councils. Is reported that Warwickshire County Council is in a strong position and that it has the fastest growing economy in the country which is positive and ensures our children are given the best opportunities.

“Why is there never any money for gritting, will that remain the same”?

IS responds and says there is a set policy for gritting and unfortunately Loxley do not fall into the category required for gritting, she explains it is very difficult decision and she understands people's concerns and will always keep asking the question.

“The number 7 bus always has pupils standing and there is never enough room for any other passengers to board”?

IS says she will look into this as there should be one designated bus for school transport. Thanks was given to IS for the council update and staying to answer questions as well as the support in respect of Safer Schools funding.

B) Church - Update received from PGH

PGH provided a brief overview of activities over the year including on-going fundraising efforts and the successful programme of concerts which have been raising funds for the Church Fabric Fund. He reminded parishioners of the forthcoming Strawberry Fayre in July.

C) Finances - Update received from JW

JW gives a brief report on the parish council finances, £6,930 was the precept agreed, we have received grants for the NDP, and the main expenses are grass cutting, clerk's salary and the previous cost of election. The precept will remain the same as the previous year, we then have reserves for spending money on the play area, we still have a large reserve for spend on traffic calming as to date spend has been restricted to the purchasing of a flashing speed light.

Q & A Discussion

“The hill by the church should be a priority as cars giving way is becoming increasingly difficult”

JW says that the cost of traffic lights would be unaffordable.

“Are we done with NDP costs, is there another grant due”?

There will be another grant due for 2018/2019.

4) Parish Council Updates :

A) NDP – Update received from Councillors

GJ thanked Jonathan and Peter and members of the working group for all the work they have done for the NDP. We were asked to look at the development of Loxley and prepare a plan where we have influence over the design. GJ explains it's a community plan where everyone gets a vote and is able to give their views in the consultation period. There are no right or wrong views. We can revise the plan after the consultation period if necessary.

He reminded residents of the background to the plan:

- Initiated by the designation of Loxley as a LSV and requirement to identify sites to accommodate around 30 homes
- The plan was started only after an initial feasibility analysis by LPC, and ensuring there was sufficient support among local residents, and residents willing to lead the plan
- The plan has been led and developed by residents (not the PC)
- Any changes to the plan made by LPC have been closely informed by – and agreed with – the independent consultant who is a chartered town planner previously employed by Stratford DC with success in developing approved NDPs

The work already done tells us that:

- 1) There are few potentially very few viable sites in the village
- 2) All sites are compromised in some way, eg.: access and visibility problems due to the hilly nature of the village.
- 3) Sites in the plan represented the best of a relatively poor choice and came out of the initial sieving process and are the sites LPC will consult on

In the final approved plan site designation does not mean a site will be developed :

- the landowner whether and when to develop,
- the site may not ultimately be financially viable
- Designation does not guarantee planning consent.

The official consultation period will run from the 24TH May 2018 for six weeks until the 5th July 2018. The survey should ideally to be completed online, however hard copies can be completed if necessary.

GJ completed his introduction by drawing parallels with the well-known 'prisoners dilemma' (essentially a paradox in decision analysis in which individuals acting in their own self-interests do not result in the optimal outcome). He hoped that in considering the plan residents would consider carefully wider community interests based on the challenges facing a small community like Loxley where ensuring the continuing viability of facilities remained a challenge and the risks of the community becoming a 'retirement village' based on the limited choice of housing available.

Q & A Discussion

“Can you confirm what we have is the whole document as I have printed it off and the page numbers don't correspond”?

GJ checks the document and confirms is correct so maybe printer settings.

“ It took a while to find the survey online”

GJ demonstrates on his i-phone where on the website you can gain access to the online survey, but encourages people to contact him should they have problems.

“Can we remind people that the Survey is anonymous”

This is confirmed by GJ – survey returns are anonymous, although written comments will be put together in separate documents the authors will remain anonymous.

“Can you confirm it is one view per person”

GJ states that the consultation plan is only one view per household to make the process manageable and this exceeds requirements and approaches adopted in other communities. It also provides a basis for ensuring that monitoring returns to ensure that individuals are not submitting multiple returns and trying to 'game' the system. However the final plan will be voted on by all resident eligible to vote. And anyone can submit comments to the parish council.

“Having looked at the questions they appear too narrowly defined. The parish plan is not clear on - for example: there is only 3 children from Loxley village that attend the school, where are the development actions for the school”?

GJ notes the plan takes into account these issues. Viability is key for the school, the parish council, the pub and the church. Viability will be helped by increasing the numbers in the village, we need more affordable houses for younger people/families and this is clearly shown in the demographic of the village at present and more families in the village could help boost the number of local children at the school. A key element of the plan is to increase population and the mix of homes available – which is as much as the Council can do to address the issues identified in light of its limited powers and resources.

“Why can we not have a development plan that asks landowners to have social housing as well as bigger houses”?

GJ responds to say that landowners are going to want to maximise returns and so the Council have struggled to identify a site for social housing – but should one come forward there are provisions in the plan to include it as an exceptions site. However, LPC would do all they could to help promote housing choice and a better mix but clearly do not have the ability to specify precisely what . can be built

“The strategic objective is to get 31 houses, do we need a broader range of sites, have we looked at how we achieve 31, have we got enough development opportunities”?

GJ says that we want to balance the need to protect the environment with the demands of development, we have looked at all possible sites and the ones we are left are the best options available but remain compromised in various ways.

”Are we still under obligation to find so many houses given that Wellesbourne has lots of new homes”?

Not at the moment – but housing numbers are under constant review and there remains housing pressures given the pace of growth in the County. GJ also noted that there are many benefits for the community by increasing housing numbers, in ten to fifteen years what services will still be viable if population of the village remains as it is ?

”Why is site K back in”?

GJ noted that the Council put this site back in having been excluded in response to allegations that it had not been dealt with fairly and not least because this was the view of the independent consultant. It was carefully reviewed by parish councillors and at the meeting no Councillor objected to the site being put back in the plan.

B) Environment Group – Update received from JF /MG/ DB

Julie Fewins (Chair of the Environment Group) talked about the desire to look at footpaths and access to them and also the signage not being up to scratch. In terms of progress by the Group:

- There are now three walks all mapped and on the website
- A kissing gate which has been installed on PGH land
- The community walk proved to be a success and we will look to plan more in the coming year.
- We have been working closely with the school, looking at forest school, the community garden, planting, landscaping and seating ideas to be enjoyed by the whole community.

Anyone is welcome to get involved with the group.

MG highlighted the lengthsman scheme, and while we didn't have a lengthsman for a year we now have Matt (the school caretaker) who has taken the position. Any jobs you feel need addressing please speak to MG and she will approach them with the Wellesbourne Clerk, MG feels that this will not continue to be funded for much longer but to date the scheme has worked well.

C) Traffic Calming – Update Received from KO

KO notes that new signs for overweight vehicles, following trouble with heavy vehicles passing through the village.

4. Any other business

None

5. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 15th May 2019.

GJ thanked all residents for attending and looked forward to seeing them next year.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.