

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
19:30, 16th January 2017, Jubilee Pavilion

Present:-

Chairman – Mr A Wilkinson
Ms J Booth
Mr C Cave
Ms S Hardingham
Mr M E Harris
Dr P Jackson
Mr D Johnson
Ms L Lansley
Mr B Lee
Mrs B Mackwood
Mr S McQuillan
Mr N Moorcroft
Mrs J Pullin
Mr I Scoones
Mr R Sterland
Mr J Thomas
Miss M Uppington

Absent:-

Ms S Hughes
Mr A Johnson

In attendance - The Clerk, Dr JE Turp and Mrs V Lacey (minutes).

Public Participation

Before the start of the formal meeting, Mandy Bishop, Assistant Director, Operations – Development and Environment, North Somerset Council (NSC) updated councillors on the outcome of the Community Access Review.

C17.00 - Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hughes, Mr Riggall (NS Liaison Officer) and Cllr Stowey (NS Ward Councillor).

C17.01 - Chairman's remarks

The Chairman welcomed Cllr James Thomas to the meeting, and updated the council on the resignation of Cllr Hayward, to whom he will write a letter of thanks on behalf of councillors. There are now two vacancies on council. Cllr Moorcroft asked for it to be minuted that Cllr Stowey, NS Councillor for Long Ashton ward, has attended just one Parish Council meeting since she was elected.

C17.02 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

Interests to be declared during the meeting and no dispensations were requested.

C17.03 - Exclusion of the press and public

There were no items necessitating the exclusion of press or public.

C17.04 - Parish Council Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th November, having previously been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

C17.05 - Matters arising

C.16.176a - Projector in the Jubilee Pavilion. Ongoing.

C.16.176b - Response of Taylor Wimpey to PC comments on its public art proposals. There has been no response from Taylor Wimpey on this matter.

C17.06 - To appoint Cllr Thomas to Committees

Cllr Thomas was appointed to the Planning and Highways & Burial Ground committees.

C17.07 - Vacancies on Committees

It was agreed that vacancies created by Cllr Hayward's resignation will be considered at the next meeting. It was noted that no additional members are needed for the Village Enhancement Scheme. Cllr Moorcroft was appointed to the Patients' Participation Group.

C17.08 - Planning Committee Reports

The reports of the Planning Committee of the meetings held on 7th November and 12th December were adopted. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour. The minutes of 9th January meeting will be considered at the next council meeting.

C17.09 - Highways and Burial Ground Committee Report

The report of the Highways and Burial Ground Committee meeting held on 28th November was adopted, subject to any amendments by the Committee. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. Seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

C17.10 - Finance and General Purposes Committee Report

The report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the meeting held on 19th December was adopted, subject to any amendments by the Committee. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

Cllr Jackson declared an interest in the budget and left the meeting at 20:05, taking no part in the discussion. It was noted that Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin and Cllr Hardingham as PC nominated members of LACA and the youth club management committee respectively have current dispensations to take part and vote on matters involving LACA and the youth club.

Based on the report,

a) Following discussion around the request for a 16% increase in LACA's grant for next year it was agreed that budgetary provision should be made for the full amount but that the precise payment terms would be decided at February's F&GP committee meeting. It appears that some community centre user groups may be being subsidised to a greater extent than others and councillors would like this addressed by LACA which may help to reduce LACA's reliance on Parish Council grants. It was RESOLVED to adopt the budget as recommended by F&GP on 19th December (previously circulated). Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr D Johnson. All in favour.

b) It was RESOLVED to set the precept at £154,600 representing a 1.98% rise on the Band D tax. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Harris. Motion carried with one against. No abstentions.

c) It was RESOLVED to accept F&GP's recommendation that, subject to a satisfactory IFA report, the proceeds from the maturing Triodos bond are invested in the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

Cllr Jackson rejoined the meeting at 20:19.

C17.11 - Long Ashton Community Association

a) Cllr Mrs Pullin gave the following report: To avoid an expensive solicitor's charge, a West of England Rural Network adviser has been consulted by the trustees looking at changing the constitution of LACA from a registered charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Progress has been made and we anticipate another meeting soon. Meetings have also been held with the Bowls and Football Clubs regarding future increases in hire charges and further meetings will be held in the coming weeks.

Three strong local applicants were interviewed for the Community Garden project resulting in the appointment of Jason Loh. A list of LACA's aspirations has been drawn up and Mr. Loh will meet with users of the complex for their input. It is hoped a master plan for consultation will be available for display at the Village Picnic in June.

A water risk assessment found high levels of bacteria in the cold water storage tank in the Griffin Lounge. This was replaced at a cost of £1,400, bringing it to a regulatory standard. An assistant to the manager has been engaged for eight hours a week, not as an employee, but by invoicing for services rendered.

A booking by a company filming for a BBC2 comedy, using the hall for half a day, resulted in a £400 payment. LACA continues to book theatre productions - there will be two in March and one each in April & May.

Cllr Wilkinson thanked the LACA trustees for their work.

C17.12 - Community Safety - Local Action Team

Cllr Cave updated councillors on the recent PACT meeting. Yellow lines in Leigh Woods were discussed and while there are still gaps in the lines on Bridge Road and North Road, NSC has raised the order for them to be completed. Civil Parking Enforcement will start in Weston-super-Mare shortly, and is due to be extended into other areas of North Somerset later in 2017. The South Bristol Link (SBL) underbridge was also discussed at the meeting. It was reported that Cllrs Cave and Moorcroft met a NSC representative on site, to discuss the width of the underbridge, the flooding there, and that it is planned for the footpath to be shared by pedestrians and cattle. The models used by the SBLR design team indicated that the footpath was above the level of the 100-year flood event. However, recent heavy rain flooded the footpath to 3 ft. NSC has undertaken to clear the trash dams in the brook downstream, but it was noted that it might be necessary to widen the brook, to mitigate the risk of further flooding if a high spring tide were to coincide with heavy rain. Cllr Sterland reported that data from the PC's vehicle activated signs may not clearly illustrate any difference in traffic flows due to the SBLR until the recently closed Hartcliffe Way is reopened. There was dissatisfaction about the inadequacy of the signs provided to alert motorists to the closure of Barrow Street, and the diversions along Wild Country and Yanley Lanes. It was noted that Long Ashton's PCSO is back in the village after a recent redeployment, while another accident on Rownham Hill has increased residents' pleas for a 20 mph speed limit.

C17.13 - Youth Provision

a) Youth Club Report. Cllr Jackson gave the following report:

The youth club has re-opened after the Christmas period, and we continue to build the new Monday evening format around school years 7-9. Wednesday evenings are

focused around the older age group as more of a drop-in session. The junior session on Thursday evenings continues to be very well supported with numbers usually around 15-20 young people. Young people have requested that we might do some work to better understand the views of young people in the village. The idea emerging is a programme with video interviews and discussion with the young people and also with some adults. Kathy (EPIC Youth) has been in discussion with a local film-making company that is interested in the project, which has the makings of an interesting inter-generational scheme.

We've re-opened discussions with the graffiti artist with a view to the graffiti project associated with the end of the Club Room taking place around March when the weather starts to improve.

We have looking at how to move forward on a skate ramp park to meet needs in this area. Recently we have started to look at a pump ramp (or pump track) approach. We will engage with LACA in the first instance when the thoughts have matured to discuss Peel Park as a possible location.

On finances, increased fundraising efforts were made in 2016. In December the open evening attracted many parents and guardians. The Youth Club worked with the Village Market and around £270 was raised at the December market through a series of activities. A number of young people were involved in the planning and during the market day itself.

b) Children and Young People's Network

A grant application made to Quartet for further activities for young people has been successful; this will fund an additional worker for the youth club together with an activities trip. A second application to cover costs for further street dance and healthy lifestyle activities has not been accepted. Phil Jackson is in discussion with North Somerset Council, which provides the funding for this grant, and may look to Cllr Cave to assist in the discussion about its decision.

A Network meeting is being arranged, provisionally on 31st January at 7:30pm, to discuss the process for managing small grants for youth groups funded by the Parish Council.

C17.14 - ALCA Avon Local Councils Association NS Group - There was no report.

C17.15 - Parish Councils Airport Association

Cllr Scoones reported on the PCAA meeting on 1st December. Objections have been raised to the airport's current application to build an extension to its existing car parking on green belt when it has failed to build the promised multi-storey car park. It is hoped that a review of the Aviation National Policy Statement in 2018 will lead to new guidelines and increased scrutiny of airport permissions. The PCAA has had no response as yet to its complaint to the Competition and Markets Authority. The next PCAA meeting is in March 2017.

C17.16 - Parish recycling scheme working group

Four councillors worked with NSC employees to conduct a recent recycling participation survey. The results of the survey indicate that Long Ashton residents are below average in terms of recycling. There was evidence that recycling isn't always sorted, that containers aren't washed before putting them out for collection and some boxes, contained materials such as black plastic, which cannot be recycled. It was agreed to include an article on the subject for the next newsletter. There is concern about

forthcoming changes to North Somerset garden waste collections and recycling centre opening which, it's believed, may increase fly-tipping.

C17.17 - Superfast broadband working group - This is ongoing.

C17.18 - Community Engagement

Website working group. Ongoing - a meeting will be arranged shortly. ALCA are running a community engagement course - any interested councillors to inform the Clerk.

C17.19 - LULA (Light up Long Ashton)

Cllr Thomas was asked to thank the residents responsible for the organisation and erection of the Christmas trees throughout the village. The Clerk will organise a wash-up meeting with those involved.

C17.20 - Scout Group HQ Working Group

Ongoing. The group will meet after Cllr Cave has explored another potential site for the Scout Group HQ. Although there are some concerns about using Birdwell Recreation Ground for a Scout HQ, the PC is keen to support the group in its search for a site given increasing demand for scouting in the village. It was suggested that the working group could approach Taylor Wimpey to discuss the principle of putting a youth building on Peel Park.

C17.21 - External Auditor's report

The audit has yet to be finalised although the Clerk has received further questions. The report was expected in September.

C17.22 - Vacancies

If no poll is called following the advertisement of the vacancy due to the resignation of Barry Hayward it is hoped that the two vacancies will be advertised at the same time, with two new councillors being co-opted on to Council at the meeting on 20th March.

C17.23 - Taylor Wimpey plans for the Vale

Taylor Wimpey's article about the Vale in the Evening Post was discussed, and whilst its application for the Vale may not be approved because of NSC and Government policy to protect the green belt, there is some concern that a housing inspector may look more favourably on it, were a refused application to go to appeal. It was noted that some of the land proposed for The Vale development by Taylor Wimpey is flood plain, and that any intensive development there would inevitably lead to flooding, especially since nearby land used for SBLR development has already flooded.

Bristol University also looks set to submit a planning application to NSC for development on green belt surrounding the village. It was agreed to discuss both matters at the next Planning meeting, and to continue to investigate commissioning a Planning Consultant to support the PC in fighting inappropriate development in the green belt.

C17.24 - Training provided by planning consultant

The Clerk will contact the planning consultant who recently delivered an ALCA training course to see if she can provide training on how to best use and engage planning experts to provide assistance when inappropriate development is put forward.

C17.25 - Village Club

Cllr Moorcroft has done the preparatory work for an application to have the Village Club listed and the PC has commissioned a valuation of the building. An analysis of the viability of establishing a Community Interest Company to take ownership of the building, which was compiled by a member of the village club, has been sent to a community group currently discussing potential uses for the club. As the building is an asset of community value it cannot be sold to anyone other than a community group until April 2017. It was noted that increased community engagement is needed to determine the most appropriate use of the building for the community, and it was suggested that the next newsletter could be used to update residents.

Cllr Lansley left the meeting at 21:40.

C17.26 - Community Resilience

No update other than to note that Cllrs Cave, Lee, Mrs Mackwood, Moorcroft and Wilkinson are leading Community Resilience on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr McQuillan left the meeting at 21:43.

C17.27 - Payment for room for first aid classes.

It was RESOLVED to cover room hire costs of up to £100 for first aid classes to be delivered by a doctor who lives in Long Ashton. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Pullin, seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour.

C17.28 - Correspondence

- a) From Avon and Somerset PCC – re Police plan. Noted.
- b) From resident with request for skate park. A nine year old resident has written to the PC to ask for a skate ramp to be installed in Long Ashton. The Clerk will reply to say that the Youth Club is currently looking at options and that the PC part owns a mobile skate ramp currently stored at Nailsea police station.
- c) Letter from PC Faithfull re absence. Noted.

C17.29 - Any items for information

- a) Development at former Auto Scuderia site. The Clerk will circulate to councillors the notes of a meeting between some Parish Cllrs, a resident and a NSC officer held to discuss problems with the development of the site.
- b) The site on Long Ashton Road known as Cox's shop has been sold and screened from the road. It was noted that no development work should be undertaken without planning permission and that the site is in a conservation area.

Date of next meeting: Monday 20th March

Meeting closed at: 21:56

Presentation by Mandy Bishop, Assistant Director, Operations – Development and Environment, North Somerset Council (NSC).

Thank you for allowing me to come and speak to you again. I promised that I would come back to explain the results of the review after it had finished. We did a 12 week consultation between July and September 2016, around changes to libraries and children's centres. Following this consultation, a report went to the NSC executive in December 2016. We were considering different options: a) keeping the services separate and reviewing them; b) reducing the library's footprint and getting in a partner; c) changing the location of the library; and d) closing the library. Most people in Long Ashton wanted a library in the village, and there were lots of comments about the central location being important. There were lots of positive comments too from people about the children's centre being co-located with the school. In some cases, it is often the case that if a library is moved, it may as well be closed, and we feel this was the case in Long Ashton. People felt quite strongly that the library should not be co-located with the children's centre, and they also wanted us to open up access to library services. Long Ashton library is currently open for 21 hours a week, and it bucks the trend in that it has actually seen growth in usage, so there's evidently a need for the service. So, in response to this, the NSC Executive opted to retain both library and children's centre in their existing locations, and the services will work closely with one another. We had left the upgrade of data lines into the library until the review was finished - as they are expensive. Now the review has finished, we will be able to do this upgrade, so there'll be an improvement in the service we can offer. We are also looking to extend our self-service offer in the village, so there will be staffed and unstaffed opening hours - we identified a particularly strong need for this in Long Ashton as there are plenty of people who work from home and need support for their online businesses out of hours. So, at the moment, we're doing a staffing structures consultation, and we're looking to increase opening hours from 21 hours per week to 78 hours. So, if you have a library card, you'll be able to swipe it for a code for entry into the building. The building will be staffed on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. It will be accessible, without staff, from 8am til 8pm Mondays through Saturdays, and 10 til 4pm on a Sunday. These changes will take effect by September. Before then, we'll need to put automatic doors in, and make other changes. NSC is paying for this by selling some of its properties, and investing more in its children's centres and libraries. These are still suggested changes, and we are open for discussion. Library staff have seen the proposals, and we're waiting for feedback. One thing to note is that we got the second largest response to the review from Long Ashton, and this means that, unlike other local authorities, which are closing libraries, we are investing in them. But we do need the help of the community. We need volunteers who don't mind going into the library to keep the facilities working for the community - people who will spend half an hour in the building and, for example, do some tidying up. We need to work out how we're going to work together to ensure that the library's looking good for the community, and we hope to be able to do this through a network of volunteers.

Q&A

Question from Cllr Mrs Pullin: "When will staff be in the library?"

A: From 9:30 til 5pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 9:30 til 1pm on a Saturday. But some people are asking us to consider staggering the hours at the moment, to allow for one late evening. We're reducing our staff resources at the moment, and are asking for voluntary redundancies, to try to avoid making them compulsory. We're try to ensure balance and continuity for the community.

Question from Cllr Lansley: "What happens now?"

A: We have to renegotiate the lease with the landlord around August 2017.

Question from Cllr McQuillan: "Will there be enough staff numbers for the library to continue to hold rhyme time, for example?"

A: It could be that services are run across the sites. For example, if the children's centre is lacking space for a particular service, it could come and deliver its services from the library, where there's more space - now that we have the room at the back.

Question from Cllr Mrs Pullin: "What will happen when staff take a break?"

A: The library will dip into self-service mode during those hours. At the moment, for staff to take a break, they need to close the library.

Question from Cllr Harris: "Will the mobile library still be used?"

A: Yes, but need for the service is changing and we can't keep it for just a few people. We will have to tweak it in response to the needs of users.

Question from Cllr D Johnson: "What if there's accident while the place isn't staffed?"

A: We're speaking to authorities that have already introduced self-service into their libraries, and we're having discussions with our insurers and CCTV operators. We can decide who's allowed to go into the library at these times and we could, for instance, say that under 18s aren't allowed in if they're not accompanied by an adult. There are limitations to the arrangement, however, and we'll obviously have to review our risk and health and safety procedures.

Question from Cllr Lansley: "What will happen to the children's centre?"

A: We are amalgamating some parts of the service. For example, the children's centre has a business support role and the library has a library assistant; we could pool these roles. We're changing a bit of the management of the services and they will work more closely together. We're also cross-training staff and aiming to use our staff resource more flexibly.

Question from Cllr Mrs Pullin: "When will the changes take place?"

A: This will take effect before September. There will be some down time while we put in the new systems between June and August, but we'll only make the changes once we've renewed the lease. We'll be looking at a five to 10 year lease, depending on the negotiated terms, and we'll have break clauses in if possible. The lease is quite costly.

Question from Cllr Wilkinson: "Do you need anything from us?"

A: We're going to need support from the community in the form of volunteers keeping an eye on the building, going in to tidy up for half an hour, that sort of thing.

Question from Cllr Wilkinson: "How are you going to do this?"

A: Throughout the consultation process, we asked people if they'd be prepared to help us, plus we've got an established volunteering process and we advertise opportunities through the website. It would be helpful if you could also spread the word and get news out through your newsletter. We have worked really hard to keep these services going - you can see from the news that other authorities are closing their libraries. We now need the community's support in helping us run them.

Councillors thanked Ms Bishop for her time, and for her team's work in producing the review.