

LONG ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

19:30, 20th March 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; Mrs V Lacey (minutes);
Mr M Riggall, NS Liaison Officer, from 20:20; and six members of the public, (one from 19:56.)

C17.30 - Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Stowey (NS Ward Councillor). Mr Riggall (NS Liaison Officer) had told the Clerk that he would be late.

C17.31 - Chairman's remarks

The Chairman noted that the PC's auditor, Grant Thornton, has not yet completed its inspection of the PC's accounts. He expects the PC to receive a substantial bill for the extra work the auditor has done in answering one resident's objection. The Clerk too has spent a significant amount of time providing additional paperwork to the auditor as part of this process.

C17.32 - Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

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

C17.33 - Exclusion of the press and public

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

C17.34 - Parish Council Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th January, having previously been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

C17.35 - Matters arising

C17.01 - Response from Cllr Stowey. Cllr Stowey has written to the PC in response to Cllr Moorcroft's assertion that she has attended just one meeting since her election, to say that her absences have been for legitimate reasons and that she has attended more than one meeting.

C17.05a - Projector in the Jubilee Pavilion. Ongoing.

C17.05b - The Clerk has had no response to her letter to Taylor Wimpey confirming that the PC will accept a sum of £24,000 to commission two public art works on the Taylor Wimpey developments.

C17.24 - Planning training will be held on 16th May, at 7pm. The matter will be discussed at the next Planning meeting.

C17.36 - Planning Committee Reports

The reports of the Planning Committee of the meetings held on 9th January, 6th February and 6th March were adopted, the latter subject to any amendments by the Committee. Proposed by Cllr Miss Uppington, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

C17.37 - Highways and Burial Ground Committee Report

The report of the Highways and Burial Ground Committee meeting held on 30th January was adopted, subject to any amendments by the Committee. Proposed by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. Seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.

C17.38 - Finance and General Purposes Committee Report

a. Cllr Mrs Pullin suggested that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February be amended to state that the PC rather than LACA will pay for any necessary alterations or additional shelving needed in the workshop, as part of the expansion of the PC office. It was agreed that the matter will be discussed at the next F&GP meeting, when Cllr Mrs Pullin will provide an estimate of the potential costs. The report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the meeting held on 13th February was then adopted, subject to any amendments by the Committee. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Cave. All in favour.

b. Cllr Scoones was appointed to the F&GP committee to fill the vacancy left by Cllr Hayward's resignation. Proposed by Cllr Harris all in agreement.

C17.39 - Long Ashton Community Association

a. Report for information. Cllr Mrs Pullin gave the following report: "The manager's assistant has settled in well and is proving a great help to her. We recognise that we have an extremely capable, willing manager but one who is still putting in extra unpaid hours, such is the volume of work to be undertaken. Events to bring in income have taken place including a theatre production and a vegan supper - which sold out. Another will be arranged shortly to accommodate a greater number of people. The annual quiz night also sold out and made £630 profit. The cafe also shows a steady rise in income since the new year. As reported at the last meeting, the second meetings have now taken place with the Bowling Club and Football Clubs. Much volunteer time has been given by trustees and the new treasurer, together with the manager, to agree terms for both clubs and other hirers for the year commencing 1st April. We have reached amicable agreements with both Football and Bowling Clubs and recognise the amount of voluntary help given by both bodies in maintaining pitches and green and by their support of events arranged by LACA. We have not spoken at this time to the third large user, the Youth Club, which, because of the nature of its work, i.e. working with young people, currently receives a 33% discount.

b. To discuss the PC's relationship with LACA, to give all councillors the opportunity to share their views; especially in light of the wish to discuss a three year grant settlement with LACA.

Note that councillors who are trustees of LACA have a dispensation to discuss matters relating to the Community Association at PC meetings.

Councillors felt unable to have an informed discussion about the PC's ongoing relationship with LACA without numerical information about the new financial arrangements with the

Bowls and Football Clubs and Cllrs Cave and Mrs Pullin (as trustees) were asked to provide the information and also whether comparisons with other facilities had been made. They were also asked about hire charges in general and how the increased user charges might help to reduce the shortfall in LACA's budget. Cllr Cave believed there would be no reduction in the grant request from LACA as a result of these changes. Councillors emphasised the value of the PC's relationship with LACA, its trustees and staff, and the quality of its services. To reassure itself that the grant is providing value for money the PC needs to be content that LACA is running as efficiently as possible. Although it was suggested that widespread cutbacks and reduced funding might make it necessary for all groups to pay a market rate for their use of Community Centre facilities it was noted that if its charges were disproportionate, user groups would go elsewhere. The need for transparency in the distribution of community funds was noted, although it was acknowledged that LACA is not deficient in this respect it was felt that if user groups were being subsidised then they should adopt the same ethos. It was noted that LACA has been operating without a treasurer for a while, and that it now has a new treasurer in post.

One member of the public joined the meeting at 19:56.

It was noted that recommendations from the PC's external auditor, together with the effect of LACA becoming a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) will have to be taken into account when considering future payments to LACA and a possible three year settlement. Cllr Cave passed on some comments from Mr Kindred, a trustee of LACA, refuting the claims made by a local resident about the running of the Community Association. Cllr Cave went on to criticise Cllr Booth for her lack of attendance at LACA meetings and other aspects of her behaviour as a trustee. Cllr Booth strongly objected to the comments stating that LACA meeting minutes would show her attendance at trustee meetings and that other accusations were not true. Cllr McQuillan asked for it to be noted that he did not think Cllr Cave's comment was constructive, while Cllr Johnson felt that accusations should not be levelled where facts are insufficient. The Chairman ended the discussion and it was agreed that LACA will provide additional financial information for the next F&GP committee meeting on 18th April.

c. It was RESOLVED to agree the appointment of John Maughan as treasurer of LACA. Proposed by Cllr Moorcroft, seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour.

d. It was agreed to invite Mr R Whittington to a meeting to discuss LACA's new constitution. The Clerk will arrange an evening meeting on Tuesday 11th April.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:11 to allow members of the public to speak, and reconvened at 20:12.

e. To RESOLVE to approve reincorporation of LACA as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and its new constitution. It was agreed that no resolution could be made until after the meeting with Mr Whittington, and it was agreed to add the matter to the agenda for the Annual Council Meeting on 15th May.

f. To RESOLVE to approve the transfer of the lease to the new CIO with associated legal costs. This was also deferred until after the meeting with Mr Whittington.

C17.40 - Community Safety - Local Action Team

Cllr Booth and a member of the public left the meeting at 20:16, followed by another member of the public at 20:17.

Cllr Cave gave the following report: "I have discussed the various yellow lines that the PC requested with NSC noting that regulations have tightened up considerably. NSC has no record of the yellow lines on the junction of Weston Road with Birdwell Road that were removed during the road resurfacing and never replaced. Although I was able to prove that they were there with a photograph, there does not appear to be an appropriate TRO. There

needs to be some solution to the issue of waiting restrictions outside Piccolos, where the highway goes in by some 1.7m, to either allow it for parking, or not." Cllr D Johnson suggested that the area could be improved as part of the Village Enhancement Scheme.

Mr Riggall joined the meeting at 20:20.

"I am seeking support for the requests for double yellow lines that we've had refused at the east end of the village from First Bus."

One member of the public and Cllr Booth rejoined the meeting at 20:22.

"We are aiming to uncover some of the monuments and graves in the burial ground that are almost hidden, with the help of the Churchyard Trust.

There's a PACT meeting on 12th April, so please come along with any issues. The police do generally come."

Cllr Moorcroft added that both the Vehicle Activated Speed signs are now working.

C17.41 - Youth Provision

a. Youth Club Report. Cllr Jackson gave the following reports:

"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 and up to 25 young people. We're continuing to promote the Monday session for school years 7 to 9, but the attendance has been disappointing so far with this age group with five evenings in total when no-one has attended. We've recently put further publicity out around the Monday session. The management committee will review the viability of this at its next meeting and look at options for the Monday session. During the half term, a trip was organised to Mendip Pursuits where young people were able to experience caving and Frisbee golf. This was a good opportunity for the young people to learn, experience new challenges and have fun. With the weather now improving we're in discussion with the graffiti artist to fix a date for the graffiti project associated with the end of the Club Room. The latest youth club accounts were presented at the last Council Meeting; the next youth club meeting takes places on 4th April."

b. Children and Young People's Network Report

"A consultation with young people was held at Long Ashton Community Centre to understand their views on a skate park in the village. Over 30 young people attended the consultation. Kathy Jackson, Youth Worker from EPIC Youth, hosted the session where young people were able to look at options including a pump track or a more conventional skate park. The young people, who ranged in age from 6 to 17 years, engaged in discussions and gave their opinions on the pros and cons of the two styles of skate park. Discussions also took place on the ideas for fundraising which will be needed for the park. Some parents attended and were in favour of the skate park as they felt it was unsafe for children to be travelling to other skate parks for activities. Emails of support on the skate park were also received from those who were unable to be present at the event. The young people voted overwhelmingly for the skate park as they considered this best met local needs. The possible location is yet to be agreed but options would include Peel Park. Considerations of the design and the location will take noise reduction and aesthetics into account. Further discussions will be planned with the local community, Parish Council and the Community Association over the coming months.

Further to discussions with North Somerset Council, a grant for street dance and healthy lifestyle activities has now been agreed with Quartet.

A meeting of the Network meeting was held on 31st January and it was good to see Youth Club, Hebron Church, Scouts and Junior Football Club represented. The meeting discussed the process for managing small grants for youth groups as funded by the Parish Council. As a result of this meeting a process description was written up and subsequently approved at the F&GP Committee on 13th February. The network committee will now take this forward and prepare grant documents, set a timeline and advertise availability of grants."

C17.42 - Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA) NS Group

The Clerk attended ALCA's recent Town and Parish Forum, where NSC gave a budget update and details of their plans for economic development and growth. £10.4 million of cuts are planned for 2017/18.

C17.43 - Parish Councils Airport Association

Cllr Scoones reported that the PCAA's next meeting is on Wednesday 22nd March. There are several important matters on the agenda and he will report back to the council afterwards. Cllr Scoones was asked where the airport is spending its community funds. He replied that it is a matter for the airport, not the PCAA.

C17.44 - Parish recycling scheme working group

It is hoped that the Scouts will get involved in the Parish Recycling Scheme. Cllr Hardingham has only received 11 signed pledges from residents promising to improve their recycling. The working group has a table at the village market on 1st April, which will be staffed by Cllrs Lansley, McQuillan and Sterland. Cllrs Cave, Wilkinson and Jackson may also be able to help.

C17.45 - Superfast broadband working group

Cllrs Moorcroft and Wilkinson will hold the first meeting of the working group shortly. It was also noted that 4G will be able to be accessed at the east of the village shortly.

C17.46 - Community Engagement - Website working group

There was no meeting to report on.

C17.47 - LULA (Light up Long Ashton)

The Clerk met the organisers of the village's 2016 Christmas lights display. They will bring a proposal for 2017's display to the council meeting in June.

C17.48 - Scout Group HQ Working Group

There was no meeting to report, although Cllr Cave is currently discussing a potential site for the Scout Group HQ with third parties.

C17.49 - Vacancies

- a. It was RESOLVED to co-opt Mrs Grace Collins to fill the vacancy in Long Ashton. Proposed by Cllr Cave, seconded by Cllr Moorcroft. All in favour.
- b. The Clerk will continue to publicise the remaining PC vacancy using Twitter, the website and the PC's noticeboards and it was agreed that she should also use "Nextdoor" a neighbourhood community private social network. One person has expressed an interest in the position so far.

C17.50 - External Auditor's report

The External Auditor, Grant Thornton, has had the PC's return for nearly 9 months, and the PC is disappointed that its report is still outstanding. The Clerk and LACA have recently been asked to provide a significant amount of information to enable the auditor to respond to an objection raised by a resident, and the PC is concerned about how this may be reflected in the fee.

C17.51 - Consultation on Public Space Protection Order

The Clerk will check that Birdwell Recreation Ground is included as it has an existing dog control order.

C17.52 - To agree to set up a Public Art working group and to agree membership.

The working group was agreed with Cllrs Hardingham, Booth, Lansley and Sterland as members.

C17.53 - To discuss the number of Cllrs on the PC and to consider requesting North Somerset Council to start the process to reduce the number of Councillors on the PC (Cllr Cave). Cllr Cave pointed out that Portishead Town Council has fewer councillors than Long Ashton PC, and around triple the population and suggested that the PC should consider whether 21 councillors is the right number for the parish. It was noted, however, that the PC's remit is constantly increasing, while people's lives are increasingly busy, and that the PC's size allows its duties to be spread without too much burden on too few. It was thought that before the size of the council was looked at it was important to look at and review how the PC works, how it can make existing councillors feel valued and able to contribute and to focus on retaining its councillors. It was agreed to arrange a facilitated discussion, and that councillors will send the Clerk the issues that they believe ought to be tackled in advance of the session. It was also agreed that the list of councillors' portfolios should be updated.

C17.54 - Table tennis table - to finalise the discussions on the outdoor table tennis table, both the purchase and installation cost, maintenance and cost, and location.

Once associated costs have been included the cost of installing a table tennis table has appears to be far more than the PC has budgeted for. Cllr Moorcroft will therefore research alternative ideas for leisure equipment to be installed, preferably at the eastern end of the village, and report back to the council.

C17.55 - Tree Council Grants

It was RESOLVED to apply for a grant of up to £750 from the Tree Council, to plant trees in the Parish. Proposed by Cllr Sterland, seconded by Cllr Mrs Mackwood. All in favour. The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) refers to prospective tree-planting sites at the western end of the village, and the grant would therefore allow a specific aim of the NDP to be realised. It was noted that there are other sites throughout the parish where trees have been felled - recently along the Festival Way by the entrance to the SBLR - which would benefit from re-planting.

C17.56 - Insurance renewal

All councillors have seen Came & Company's insurance renewal letter. No items needing to be brought to the insurer's notice were identified and the renewal was agreed.

C17.57 - Annual Parish meeting

It was agreed that Cllr Cave will ask the suspension bridge's new Bridgmaster if she will speak at the Annual Parish Meeting.

C17.58 - Taylor Wimpey plans for the Vale - nothing to report.

C17.59 - Village Club

The PC is still waiting for its valuation of the Village Club. It was RESOLVED to give the community group preparing a bid for the building £179 to pay for a banner and flyers to publicise its work. Proposed by Cllr Hardingham, seconded by Cllr Jackson. Motion carried with two against and one abstention. The Clerk has reminded NSC planning officers of the protection afforded the building as an asset of community value - both in the NDP and NSC's own planning policies.

C17.60 - Community Resilience

Cllr Mrs Mackwood attended the recent Community Resilience workshop, at which Wessex Water presented. NSC and the Environment Agency will support the PC in instances of proposed development on the flood plain particularly if there's photographic evidence of flooding in the area. A Community Resilience exercise is planned for 18th April, in Weston super Mare.

C17.61 - Correspondence

a. Great Weston Ride this ride which starts from the Park and Ride will take place on 16th July.

One member of the public left the meeting at 21:45.

b. From resident re trees by Co-op. The Clerk will write to the Co-op in support of residents' requests to ask that it plants a hedge rather than a fence on the verge by Birdwell Road, for aesthetic and biodiversity reasons.

c. From resident re problems around Orchard Rd - the Clerk will write to NSC to let it know that a kerb has been damaged and a sign buckled on Orchard Road.

d. Police Report January. Noted.

e. Youth Strategy and Best Practice Conference. It was agreed that Cllrs Hardingham and Jackson will represent the council at this conference. The Clerk will also go if possible.

f. Growing a Rural Community. The Rural Services Network which aims to create a network of 250,000 rural residents has launched a questionnaire. Noted

g. Pizza Hut delivery board. The board erected at the end of the village has been laid down by NSC and should be removed soon. However, the officer has also told the Community Cinema that no-one should use the verge for advertising.

C17.62 - Any items for information - None.

C17.63 - Burial Ground and Birdwell Rec maintenance contracts

Cllr Scoones declared an interest in this agenda item and took no part in the discussion. It was agreed to increase the scope of the Little Apple's contract with the PC, to include bramble and nettle clearance next to the Birdwell Rec. footpath with a small increase, of £150 per year, in the contract price.

Date of next meeting: Monday 15th May

Meeting closed at: 21:55