

**Lode Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 5 December 2016**

**These minutes comprise 4 pages.**

**Present:** Cllrs R Stevens (Chairman), P Dean (For the first part of the meeting),  
E Mitchell and F Platten  
Mrs E Durrant, Mrs J Stevens and one member of the public.

**97/16 Public Question Time**

There were no questions

**Apologies for Absence:** D/Cllr A Sharp, Cllrs P Lane, R Small and M Walsh, Mrs A Forecast (NT) and Mr A Cassidy (Internal Audit).

**Declaration of Interest**

Cllr Mitchell reported that she would need to excuse herself from the meeting when the planning application submitted by her husband and herself was discussed.

**98/16 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14 November 2016 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**99/16 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The Clerk reported that:-

**Fassage Close.** He had responded to the petition, which criticised inconsiderate parking in the Close, submitted by the residents. It was then noted that:-

- (i) Cllr Mitchell had provided a notice, which asked for co-operation from parents of children attending the school, for distribution and had also responded to a letter written by a parent who had complained of the behaviour of one resident.
- (ii) Cllr Stevens had prepared a notice drawing attention to the availability of parking in the village car park, which was posted by the footpath from Fassage Close and also an article for inclusion in the Lode Star

**Harveys' Drove.** The letter, which asked landowners to cut back the hedges along the first part of the Drove, had been sent to the land owners. Cllr Platten reported that the request for planings was ongoing.

**Abbey Lane.** He had received a quotation for the repair to the street light from a company recommended by ECDC and had asked for the work to be carried out. In answer to a question he reported that the head would be replaced by a more up to date LED one which should give a better spread of light and an extended life.

**Playing Field.** He had asked Truelink to include in its work programme the control of the weeds in the land between the footpath and the old vicarage fence.

**Shrub Corner.** Cllr Stevens reported that Mr Jaggard, using a micro digger hired from Mead Construction, had cleared back the ditch from the outflow pipe as far as the shed which would give an extensive area for the outflow of flood water from the corner. Mr Jaggard is to be thanked for volunteering to carry out this work.

**Cemetery** Cllr Dean reported that the missing sun dial had been purchased from Haddon Stone and that replacement parts were available. It was agreed that this should be investigated further.

Cllr Mitchell recommended that the resurfacing of the cemetery path should be considered.

**Lode Star Report.** The Clerk expressed concern that the report had been extensively altered. Cllr Mitchell explained that she had carried out the changes as, due to a extra number of articles being published, she had had to save space and parts of the report had been repeated elsewhere in the publication. She apologised to the Clerk for not making him aware of the need for the changes.

### **100/16 C/Council Report**

In the absence of C/Cllr Shuter there was nothing to report.

### **101/16 District Council Report**

D/Cllr Sharp reported in an email that:-

- The devolution proposal had been approved in November by Council.
- The local plan will come out for consultation in January.

### **102/16 Parish Reports**

#### **Anglesey Abbey**

Cllr Stevens reported that the NT was considering the future of the Sunray allotments. The Lode Longmeadow Village Trust at a recent meeting had suggested that if the NT were to make the area available to the village it could be administered by the Trust to maximise it for community use. Further discussion will take place at the January Trustees meeting.

#### **Sports' Club**

Cllr Stevens reported that the goal nets had been damaged and the players from Swaffham Bulbeck who use the pitch had erected their own.

#### **Tree Warden**

Cllr Platten on behalf of the warden reported that 400 trees had been planted in the White Fen Drove plantation and along the edge of the B1102. Mr Platten is to be thanked for organising and helping with this project.

### **103/16 Parish Council Reports**

#### **Finance**

#### **Invoices**

The Council agreed that the following payments could be made.

Clerk	Salary	296.48	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Clerk	PAYE	74.12	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Green Energy	Fassage Hall Electricity	174.17	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery	144.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
C Hatley	Village Clock	1000.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
C D Clowe	Abbey Lane Light	706.00	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Cambs ACRE	Subscription	54.00	Local Govt Act 1972 s112
Truelink	Grass Cutting	37.32	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10
Mead	Digger Hire	TBA	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 and 10

#### **Electricity 2013 225.64, 2014 227.54 and 2015 232.04**

Last month's payments were checked and signed off.

Cllr Dean reported that:-

- He had been a member of the finance sub-committee since it was first formed and, for a large period of that time, its chairman.
- At the outset and for a large proportion of the time the PC, under the guidance of the sub-committee, had struggled to achieve stability and the goal of holding the recommended year's precept in reserve. This has been achieved and for the past few years without needing to raise the precept a healthy surplus has built up.
- Under the various Acts which govern a Council's finances it is not allowed to hold revenue reserves beyond those that are considered prudent. This is generally accepted to be one year's precept. On the basis of the budget presented to the last meeting there would have been a surplus over and above this of some 30+%. A Council is permitted to hold higher reserves but these should be for specific purposes not 'that there might be higher expenses', certainly not that 'there has not been an increase in the precept for several years or that its less than £1 per household.'
- He may be considered old-fashioned but although the PC may not have to face the electorate every four years due to a lack of volunteers he has always felt that the responsibility of the PC lies with them. If there is no demonstrable need to raise the precept, and as there is a £5000 cushion, the PC should not do so'albeit 'only £280'.

At this point Cllr Dean tendered his resignation and left the meeting.

After his departure a discussion ensued. The following comments were made:-

- It was regretted that Cllr Dean had not drawn the attention of the PC to the existence of these Acts during the November meeting as it may have influenced the discussion.
- He had a depth of knowledge which would be sorely missed. It was hoped that if Cllr Stevens spoke to him he may have a change of mind.
- The impact of inflation and the need to consider high cost projects had been covered in the sub-committee minutes.

In the light of this revelation it was agreed that there was a need to revisit the budget to factor in recent changes.

**Planning** The following applications were discussed

Mr&Mrs S Jenkins 30 Northfields	16/01599/FUL Single storey side extension	
Mr J McLean 5 Swaffham Road	16/01565/FUL Two storey side extension with new porch	
Miss Johanna Hunt 36 High Street	16/01349/FUL Single storey extension and modifications to existing rear	ECDC Approved

Mrs Durrant reported that she and her husband had decided to restore the interior of the old Station House to a high standard. She said that:-

- It was their intention to reside in the refurbished dwelling
- Their concentration would be on the interior with little change being evident from the outside.
- As it is an old building it is extremely sound but it will need to be made more environmentally friendly.

- It will be a challenge and a lengthy project.
- The leylandii which are growing along the boundary will be cut back and replaced as they have a certain level of rot and give extensive shade over the property. It was suggested that the timber would last for many years burning in an wood burner.
- She confirmed that the plan is for the Station House to be a family house and the submission to an earlier version of the Local Plan for a housing development on the site no longer applies.

Councillors expressed their pleasure that an important part of the village is being brought back to life. Cllr Stevens suggested that Mr Lord, who had experience of this type of project would be a valuable source of information.

At this point, as Cllr Dean had left the meeting and Cllr Mitchell would be required to excuse herself from the meeting the PC was no longer quorate and so it was not discuss her planning application.

### **Fassage Hall**

Cllr Stevens reported that at his request the Clerk had been asked to produce a paper which would identify the responsibilities of the Fields in Trust (Custodial Trustees, the PC (Management Trustees) and the Fassage Hall Management Committee (FHMC). He then read out the paper, making a number of additions, and the content was approved by Councillors. In discussion of this item it was agreed that the document should be presented to the next meeting of the FHMC for its agreement. In discussion of this item the following points were made:-

- The PC should continue to pay the electricity invoice, as this allowed the VAT to be recovered, and, as it was responsible for the ownership of the building, the insurance premium.
- As the the FHMC had accrued a healthy bank account it should be encouraged to pay more of the electricity charges.

**104/16** There being no further business the meeting was formally closed by the Chairman at 9.00pm.

**Date of Next Council Meeting – Monday 2016.**

..... **Signed by the Chairman Cllr R Stevens**

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