

Lode Parish Council
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 9
September 2019

These minutes comprise 5 pages

Present: Cllrs R Stevens (Chairman), T Fitzgerald, T Crickmar, F Platten, I Faulkner; D/Cllr J Trapp, Mr M Platten (LLVT), Ms P Ingham-Watts (National Trust), Mr M Deacon (National Trust)

84/19 Questions from the public: none

85/19 Presentation to Council on Wicken Fen Vision by Matt Deacon (National Trust) Mr Deacon explained that the fundamental issue underlying the development of the Wicken Fen Vision is that the site owned by the Trust in Wicken is too small and too isolated to guarantee the survival of its rare and numerous species. The aim is therefore to grow the area covered by the Vision from the 358 hectares of the Wicken Fen site to 53 sq kilometres. This would be achieved by the twin approach of the Trust acquiring more land (it aims to acquire 25% of the land within the area by 2025) and working in partnership with landowners. There is a particular wish to acquire land adjacent to Waterbeach recognising both its natural value and the major increase in population that will arise from the planned development there. He stressed that the aim is improving the green space rather than making money – apart from the hub site at Wicken, access to the land would be free. Rather than working alone, the Trust wishes to engage with local communities on projects where the amenity and conservation aims are shared. He cited the development of the Fassage Green as a local example: he suggested that staff and volunteers from the Trust could work with those leading the project in Lode to maximise the benefit for all concerned. The purpose of the consultation is to establish with local people and communities the gaps that exist in the activities on offer. This could lead to providing those activities or could focus on engaging with particular groups, eg young people, perhaps through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Within the overall aim of improving the green space within the Vision area, it is planned to limit the pressure on the hub site at Wicken and to develop green spaces within communities and in the areas adjoining them – he highlighted the possibility of improving the Sportsman’s Pit in White Fen close to Lode and Swaffham Bulbeck. Whilst wanting to encourage local projects, there is a need to ensure that these plans are integrated into the overall vision rather than developing piecemeal. In discussion D/Cllr Trapp suggested that the Parish Councils between Lode and Burwell might meet together with the Trust’s Community Engagement Officer when they are appointed. Cllr Stevens commented that it is proving a challenge to recruit volunteers to replace the current generation of volunteers who are becoming less active with age. Mr Deacon said that he hoped to engage people through a particular activity with the hope that they might then take a wider interest – for example, he mentioned that archaeologists invited to excavate on a specific site may then want to be engaged with the Vision project more widely. Regarding Anglesey Abbey, which lies within the overall Vision area, Ms Ingham-Watts pointed out that a key contribution is the engagement of agricultural tenants within the estate have signed up to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. As far as maintaining involvement by residents of Lode is concerned, Cllr Stevens suggested that regular updates in Lode Star relating to activities in the more local parts of the Vision area could be productive. He thanked Mr Deacon for his presentation to the Council

86/19 Apologies: Cllr R Small; Mr M Lord (Neighbourhood Watch)

87/19 Declarations of interest (prejudicial/other): None

88/19 Minutes of previous meeting (8 July 2019): signed as a correct record

89/19 Matters arising:

- **Items in Cemetery hedge:** These have now been cleared
- **Local Highways Improvement Initiative:** The Clerk confirmed that the application for a second speed indicator had been submitted and acknowledged. Ms Ingham-Watts confirmed that the National Trust supported the application. Although this information was not available by the time the application had to be submitted, it will be valuable to add this at the next stage when we expect to be invited to agree with officers how the bid should be presented to the decision-making panel
- **Passage Green purchase:** Cllr Platten recorded her thanks on behalf of the Council for the work done by Charlie Platten and the Clerk in achieving the completion of the purchase
- **MAGPAS donation:** The Clerk reported that the donation of £11 had been sent and gratefully acknowledged by MAGPAS
- **Planning application 18/01416/FUL 39 Longmeadow:** The response from the Conservation Officer to the recent historic building descriptive report has still not been posted on the Planning portal. D/Cllr Trapp undertook to raise the delay with the Planning Team

90/19 County Council Report: none

91/19 District Council Report: The District Councillors' report is appended at the end of these minutes. D/Cllr Trapp observed that outline applications for, say, 10 houses would often be increased to 12 when the full application was submitted. At the same time, there is still a failure to build sufficient affordable housing to meet the needs of the Council area. He pointed out that funds for this were held by the Combined Authority. Cllr Stevens advised that housing associations can apply to develop exception sites for social housing but that this is not happening within the ECDC area

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- **Anglesey Abbey:** Ms Ingham-Watts reported the summer had gone well and the focus is now on the promotion of the dahlia season. In relation to the management of land for conservation, she said that one of the fields adjacent to the Abbey had been sown with plants to provide food for wild birds. Cllr Stevens said that there had been an incident where a local resident's dog had been attacked by another dog running free in Pigeon Wood. Ms Ingham-Watts responded that while the Trust expects all visitors to the area to abide by the countryside code, it is not patrolled
- **National Trust Liaison:** Cllr Platten advised that the next meeting takes place in October
- **Cycle Way:** Cllr Platten will check on the current condition of the Cycle Way. Regarding the question of an additional cut as Quy Parish Council have arranged for their section of the path, Cllr Stevens pointed out that the section from Quy to Anglesey Abbey actually lies within Bottisham Parish. D/Cllr Trapp highlighted the need to trim the hedge on the shared use path between Lode and Swaffham Bulbeck. There was some discussion about where the responsibility for this lies. Cllr Stevens said that the road side of the ditch was the responsibility of the County Council. The Clerk will report the need to trim the hedge to the County Council

- **Neighbourhood Watch:** Mr Lord sent a report which has been circulated to all members of the Council with particular reference to recent occupation by travellers of the green in Swaffham Bulbeck
- **Speedwatch:** Cllr Stevens reported that the electronic sign warning drivers of the traffic lights at Lode crossing as they enter the village from Swaffham Bulbeck is to be removed. It has not worked for a number of years
- **Lode with Longmeadow Village Trust:** Mr Platten reported that the Lode Village Picnic in August had been successful. The Trust has taken out an insurance policy for public and employers liability to cover events and activities they arrange. He announced that he and another Trustee are stepping down so that there are two vacancies on the Trustee Board
- **Tree Officer:** Liz King had advised the Clerk that the Apple Pressing Day will take place on Saturday 28 September. Cllr Stevens reported that he had been approached by a member of Swaffham Bulbeck Parish Council regarding the possibility of jointly planting trees on the 40 Acre Droveaway. D/Cllr Trapp suggested that such activity might best be coordinated through a meeting of representatives from the Parish Councils between Lode and Burwell. This proposal was supported by Lode PC members

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- **Motion proposed by Cllr Faulkner:** “Lode Parish Council wishes (1) to express its appreciation of the National Trust’s efforts to optimise the resources of Wicken Fen for the benefit of local communities through the current community engagement project and (2) to affirm its support for the project through its continuing representation on the Community Liaison Forum.” The motion was seconded by Cllr Stevens and unanimously agreed. The Council agreed that Cllr Faulkner should convey this decision to Mr Deacon
- **Purchase of Fassage Green with Lode & Longmeadow Village Trust:** The Clerk confirmed that the purchase had been completed so that the LLVT and Parish Council are now the owners of the land with 80% and 20% share respectively. The lease granting the Parish Council the tenancy was completed at the same time
- **Finance:** The following payments were agreed by the Council:

J E Giles	Salary & PAYE	£393.33	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
W Jaggard	Cemetery	£169.16	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
W Jaggard	Cemetery-Mower fuel	£6.53+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Truelink Ltd	Grasscutting	£427.76+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Truelink Ltd	Grasscutting	£217.66+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
En-tout-cas	Tennis Court Fence deposit	£5645+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Octopus Energy	Fassage Hall electricity (collected by DD)	£120.06+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10

The Clerk reported that Lode Tennis Club has been awarded £6,000 Facilities Improvement Grant and £1,200 section 106 Grant from ECDC towards the cost of replacing the fencing to

the Tennis Court which totals £11,290 exc VAT. The Tennis Club have forwarded the amount they have raised (£4,090) to the Parish Council as we are formally the applicants for the grant as the owner of the tennis court. The amount of £6,774 (£5,645 + VAT) required by the contractor as a deposit is shown in the approvals list above. The Council agreed to cover the cashflow implication of £2,684 until the grants are received when the works are completed in Feb 2020

- **Parish Council – co-option to remaining vacancy:** The Clerk advised that the advertisement had been reissued with a closing date of 7 October
- **Planning**
 - 19/01176/FUL 17 Abbey Lane, Lode CB25 9EP**

The Council commented as follows: The materials to be used in the proposed carport, in particular the Terra fencing board (which is a composite material rather than natural wood), may not be in keeping with the materials used in the neighbouring buildings
 - 19/01225/FUL 39 Lode Rd, Lode CB25 9ET**

The Council queried whether consideration had been given to the impact of the proposed development on the adjoining property, no 41, in particular how it affects access to light. It was observed that there may be a need to widen the vehicular access to enable two cars to be parked side by side. In addition the dropped kerb may need to be widened and some of the existing verge be replaced by a hard surface
 - 19/01234/FUL 26 Station Rd, Lode CB25 9HB**

The Council had no comments on this application
- **Parish Questionnaire:** Members thanked Cllr Crickmar for her work in drafting the questionnaire. She and Cllr Platten confirmed their willingness to collect responses. Cllr Crickmar will liaise with the Clerk over the wording of the last sentence
- **Allotments:** The Clerk confirmed that emails/letters are being sent to tenants regarding payment of rent for the year beginning October 2019. The Council resolved that he should approach Will Jaggard about the cost of clearing the area abutting the Cemetery and Fairhaven Close
- **Cemetery:** The Clerk advised the Council to adopt a policy whereby he could consult with either the Chair or two members of the Council where a decision needs to be made quickly for an individual on any issue not explicitly covered in the main policy regarding the Cemetery
- **Fassage Hall:** Cllr Stevens reported that he had made improvements to the lighting in the hall though further work is required on the emergency lighting. During an inspection, issues were identified relating to the water system in the hall and risks of legionella. Action is underway to address the identified risks
- **Play area:** Now that the necessary materials have been obtained, Cllrs Stevens and Fitzgerald will arrange to refill the gaps which have opened up in the safety matting
- **Footpaths:** Cllr Stevens reported that the farmer who had ploughed a footpath has agreed to ensure the proper path is reinstated
- **Local Transport:** Cllr Platten said that she will attend the consultation in Bottisham on 10 September. Cllr Stevens attended the meeting convened by D/Cllr Cane with Stagecoach to discuss local bus services. His question regarding the possibility of reinstating evening and Sunday services received a positive response. Ms Ingham-Watts will contact Stagecoach

regarding the possibility of a Sunday service as this is the Abbey's busiest day

94/19 Correspondence: The Clerk has been approached by Scope about the possibility of installing a clothes bank in Lode. The Council concluded that, regrettably, it does not have any land under its control where such a bank could appropriately be located. The Clerk will pass on this response to Scope

95/19 Date of next meeting: Monday 14 October 2019 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 10.05pm

District Councillors' Report to September Parish Council Meetings

We attended a members' seminar on the Local Transport Plan which the Combined Authority is consulting on. There's lots of detail on the web at <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/about-us/programmes/transport/ltp>. Councillors expressed concern that there had been no local consultation opportunity in the south of the district. In response **the Combined Authority have organised a session in Bottisham Sports Centre on Tuesday, 10 September from 4pm until 6.30pm**. The Consultation period ends on 27th September.

At August's Planning Committee a development in Dullingham was approved despite only including 30% affordable housing, when the Council's policy is for 40% in this part of the District. The Officer's report stated that it would be unreasonable to require more than 30% because of a viability report which the Council had commissioned. We are concerned about this apparent change in Council Policy so we have asked officers for a briefing on this.

At July's Finance & Assets Committee we approved the Council's accounts. The Council's Auditor reported that they had had insufficient staff for the audit so there was no audit report. Worse still, they admitted that they would not report to our next meeting, but rather to our meeting on 28 November. Committee members made it clear that this was unacceptable. The accounts themselves showed total spend of £43.9m against £40.3m income, a deficit of £3.6m. The bulk of this was actuarial losses on the pension, partially offset by a revaluation of assets. The deficit on providing services was £1m. The Council's reserves are now £12.9m, about a third of the annual cost of services of £38m. The full accounts, and the current year's budget can be viewed at - <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/finance/council-accounts>

Full Council in July was very short. We approved minutes, some members' questions were answered and we noted several reports. The only substantive item was the review of Polling Stations – no changes have been proposed for the Bottisham ward. The full report can be seen at - <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Review%20of%20polling%20places%20Parliamentary%202019.pdf>. If you feel your polling station should be changed, the consultation is open until 30 September.

July's Planning and Licensing Committee meetings were cancelled.

We also attended a members' presentation by the developer on the proposed Retirement Village in Bottisham. Although this would be in Bottisham, it also has wider implications. Much of the development would be in land designated as Green Belt – the argument is that it would deliver housing specifically for elderly people, which the developer argues is much needed locally. It could therefore be allowed, despite the Green Belt designation, on the grounds that it was delivering a local need. The developer suggests that a large majority of the houses would be bought by people within the Bottisham and Burwell wards. This would in turn release housing across the area for families to buy.

We visited the recycling plant at Waterbeach. It highlighted the need to reduce our waste, because recycling and composting is energy and labour intensive and much of our waste still goes to landfill. The current landfill site will be full within 12 years at current rates.

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28 August 2019