

Lode Parish Council
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 13
December 2021

These minutes comprise 7 pages

Present: Cllrs R Small (Chair), R Stevens, F Platten, T Crickmar, M Walsh;
C/Cllr A Sharp; D/Cllr J Trapp

Items from the public: The Clerk read out the following submission from the owner of 24A Fairhaven Close:

- "Access to 24A Fairhaven close is via the long thin cemetery car park access road which poses a significant safety risk for entry and exit into the property and driveway
- Usage patterns, particularly in summer months, for vehicle access has seen a substantial increase in recent years which has compounded this problem
- Safety concerns exist for the residents and visitors of 24A Fairhaven close but also for other pedestrians (and children) gaining access to the access road via the unsighted access points at the end of Fairhaven close and the other locations
- 24A proposes to change access to its front door to be from the side onto its current driveway instead of directly out onto the access road
- If it were possible 24A would like to eventually create a drop kerb for vehicle access into its driveway to be from the end of Fairhaven close rather than the long thin access road
- Along with that change the resident of 24A would also like to suggest that the pedestrian access to the access road and allotment area for residents should undergo some general improvements with pedestrian safety in mind

Switching the position of the front door and improving the vehicle access (driveway) for 24A Fairhaven close would address the resident's main safety concerns and allow a more pleasant frontage to be created for the property which should also improve the general look and feel of the area. The resident of 24A Fairhaven close is willing to make these changes at their personal cost and would be entirely committed to ensuring that any wishes of the parish council in terms of layout and style would be strictly followed."

This submission raises a number of issues which the Council determined should be considered at its meeting on 14 February 2022.

99/21 Chair's Welcome: Cllr Small welcomed those present to the meeting

100/21 Apologies: Cllr C Purbrook, D/Cllr C Cane

101/21 Declarations of interest: Cllr Small declared an interest in Planning Application 21/01625/FUL (34 High Street) and would, therefore, not take part in the discussion on this item

102/21 Minutes of meeting 8 November 2021: These were approved unanimously

103/21 Clerk's Report: The Clerk said that Truelink had been asked to cut back the brambles adjacent to the Passage Hall by 2m from the road and basketball court hard-standing

104/21 Forecast to 31 March 2022 and Budget and Precept for 2022-23: The Clerk indicated that the forecast to 31 March 2022 takes into account the planned expenditure on completing the Passage Green Project and on receiving the balance of the grant before the end of the financial year. In discussing the budget for 2022-23, the primary consideration is fulfilling the Council's continuing responsibilities whilst making provision for future projects. Given the changing powers and

responsibilities of Parish Councils, it was recognised that training and development for Councillors and the Clerk should be a priority. It was concluded that the amount of £500 in the draft budget should be increased to £750. Bearing in mind the recent emergency work on a wind-damaged cherry tree on the recreation ground, the Council considered that it should commission a survey on the trees for which it is responsible. This would enable a three year plan for tree maintenance to be built into the budget in future years. Until such time as a quotation for this work is received, a figure of £500 is to be inserted in the budget. This means that the draft precept of £17,000 would increase to £17,750. The Clerk will obtain a quotation with a view to having a more accurate figure in the 2022-23 budget for final approval at the January Meeting. Given the uncertainty about whether the January meeting might not be able to proceed if Covid restrictions are tightened further, Cllr Stevens suggested that it might be prudent to approve the budget at this meeting with the proviso that it could be amended at the January meeting if this takes place.

It was proposed by Cllr Walsh and seconded by Cllr Platten that the draft budget be approved, with the amendments to the Training budget and provision for the Tree Survey, together with a precept of £17,750. This was agreed unanimously.

ACTION: The Clerk will seek a quotation for a Tree Survey

105/21 Finance Approvals:

The Council noted the following payments which were made during November; those for Freethought were previously agreed by the Council to cover the new gov.uk email domain, Microsoft 365 setup and new laptop for the Clerk while that for Ernest Doe relates to the previously notified repairs to the Cemetery mower; the last was authorised under the emergency provision by the Chair

Freethought	Setup M365 and Laptop	£645+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Freethought	Gov.uk domain	£100+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Freethought	Laptop	£499.50+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Ernest Doe & Sons	Cemetery mower repairs	£207.95+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10

The following payments were approved with those due for Graffiti removal being withheld pending satisfactory completion of the work:

J E Giles	Salary & PAYE	£405.30	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
W Jaggard	Cemetery	£173.39	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
W Jaggard	Mower fuel	£6.99+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Tesco	Paper (pd by card)	£2.37+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Truelink	Grasscutting	£264.10+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
EON	Streetlight	£65.48+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
East Cambs Street Scene	Graffiti Removal	*£167.20+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
East Cambs Street Scene	Graffiti Removal	*£225.77+VAT	Local Govt Act 1972 s111
Simpsons	Trees (A1303 compensation)	+£387.50+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10
Eastern Tree Surgery	Emergency work to cherry tree (invoice awaited)	£250+VAT	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss 9 & 10

- *Not recommended for payment until work satisfactorily completed
- +Revised figure from that agreed in November

105/21 Planning:

a) 21/01362/FUL – Aran, 66 Lode Rd, CB25 9ET

No concerns had been raised when the application was circulated, so no extension was requested. The application has now been approved by ECDC

b) 21/01625/FUL – 34 High Street, CB25 9EW

The Council had no concerns with this application

c) 21/01637/FUL – Anglesey Abbey

The Council had no concerns with this application

d) 21/01623/FUL – The Rowans, 5 Station Rd, CB25 9HB

The Council had no concerns with this application

e) 21/01728/FUL – 61 Lode Rd, CB25 9ET

The Council had no concerns with this application

f) 21/01524/RMA – site South of 60 Longmeadow, CB25 9HA

The Council noted the comments received from the applicant regarding the boundaries as shown in the architect's drawings. The Council's comments had been submitted to ECDC following the November meeting and it is the District Council's responsibility to ensure it takes account of the information in coming to its decision

106/21 County Council Report: C/Cllr Sharp reported that the Children & Young Persons Committee had met to consider next year's budget. The allocation to schools should be notified in January.

Highways & Transport Committee met on 7 December when it was reported that the improvements to the Swaffham crossroads on the A1303 would be delayed until the beginning of next financial year because of land purchase issues. Feedback had been given to Network Rail in support of improvements to Ely junction to reduce HGV traffic on the A14. He referred to changes being considered in Mill Road highlighting that, although these are in the centre of Cambridge, the knock on effects would have an impact for commuters from East Cambs villages. He is also following up some statements about some new funding for footpaths based on the reallocation of funds from revenue to capital. The impending meeting of the full Council will endorse the appointment of an acting Chief Executive until the new permanent appointee arrives in February.

He is continuing to follow up on the timetable for renewing the path around the Recreation Ground with Jonathan Clark from Highways. He is pursuing the issue of the willow tree at Swan Corner following a zoom meeting with Cllr Small and the Clerk.

Cllr Platten raised the issue of the collapsing road at Lug Fen Drove.

ACTION: The Clerk will forward the text prepared by Cllr Purbrook together with Cllr Platten's photographs to C/Cllr Sharp

Cllr Stevens reported that he had responded to D/Cllr Trapp's request for information on damaged paths and has subsequently completed Highways Fault reports for the damaged pavement locations in Lode.

In response to a question regarding progress on the application to the Highways Improvement Fund, C/Cllr Sharp said that one village had already been notified of an appointment with Highways Officers so he will chase them with regard to Lode's application

He & Cllr Small had both attended the online seminar with the Greater Cambridge Partnership earlier in the evening; they felt that there was not a great willingness to engage with the impact on East Cambs of the Cambridge Eastern Access proposals. Cllr Small noted that one of the Partnership's officers said a site for the Park & Ride this side of the Quy roundabout could not be considered as the Partnership only covers South Cambs and the City of Cambridge. Cllr Small pointed out that Quy actually lies within South Cambs. C/Cllr Sharp was concerned that some of the

proposals were lacking in detail and that finance arrangements were unclear. He felt that the extent of the delegation to the Partnership could lead to a democratic deficit from the perspective of both County and District Councillors

107/21 District Council Report: Following on from the previous discussion, D/Cllr Trapp emphasised the potential impact of the GCP proposals leading to Newmarket Rd being virtually closed to cars. While this might suit Cambridge city residents, it would be problematic for those commuting into the City. Referring to his monthly report, he pointed out that Green waste collections had been suspended until February because of pressures on the Trading Company Street Refuse Collection Team. They are seeking to deal with the challenge of recruiting HGV drivers by re-training some of their existing staff. He noted that, following a number of comments, the Council had decided to continue its grant to West Suffolk CAB in Newmarket. He referred to the possibility of a Cycleway from Lode to Waterbeach following a recent survey. C/Cllr Sharp indicated that the likely funders would be the Combined Authority and CCC. He will establish whether there is any further information about this that can be shared with the Parish Council.

Finally, D/Cllr Trapp referred to the Business Growth Fund comprising the remainder of the money allocated to ECDC to support local business growth in the context of Covid. He queried whether this could be relevant to plans for development of the Fassage Hall

Cllr Walsh left the meeting at 9pm

108/21 Council Administration Matters: Cllr Small reported that Freethought has completed the setup of the Microsoft 365 accounts for all the Councillors and the Clerk. Councillors should have received an email from Freethought with their new details. Cllr Small proposed that the Council should transfer to the new emails with effect from 1 January

109/21 Environmental & Open Space Matters:

a) **Fassage Hall Consultation:** Cllr Small thanked Cllrs Platten and Crickmar for organising the event and producing a report so quickly.

ACTION: Cllrs Crickmar & Small will use the business planning model to begin developing the ideas that emerged from the Consultation

ACTION: Cllr Platten will engage with Fassage Hall Management Committee and also reach out to the Sports Club contacts

ACTION: Further discussion to be put on the agenda for the February Parish Council meeting

b) **Damaged tree on the Recreation Ground:** Cllr Small reported that Liz King had met with Eastern Tree Surgery to assess the work needed. Given the risk to the public, emergency work was authorised by Cllr Small and has now been carried out. Some further work was identified as being necessary during the summer

ACTION: Agenda item for January

c) **Allotments:** The Clerk reported that all but one of the respondents to the consultation had been supportive of the proposal to improve the water supply. Cllr Small will consider whether a meeting with allotment holders in the New Year might strengthen their involvement with the project

d) **Graffiti on bus shelters:** The Clerk has written to the manager of the Street Scene outlining that the cleaning work is both incomplete and not carried out in accordance with the general and specific instructions agreed before the work commenced. The Officer will investigate and report back. As noted above, the invoices raised for the work have not been agreed for payment

110/21 Committee Matters: The Council noted the minutes of the Human Resources Committee

111/21 Correspondence: The Council noted the correspondence received

112/21 Communications: Cllr Platten reported that notification has been given of the Litter Pick on 6 February from 3-4pm. She agreed to write the article for the January Lode Star. With reference to

future articles, Cllr Small suggested that it might be helpful to base future articles around topics of interest related to the work of the Parish Council. These could be discussed at the next meeting.

113/21 Items for future agendas:

January: Topics for Lode Star articles
Proposed Tree work (Eastern Tree Surgery)

February: Follow up to Fassage Hall consultation
Decision on response to request from resident of 24A Fairhaven Close

District Councillors Report to Parish Councils December 2021

December deadlines for responses to Greater Cambridge Partnership consultations

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) has two public consultations on proposals for transport links in and around Cambridge. Some of these proposals have significant implications for our routes into Cambridge, especially along the Newmarket Road.

The Making Connections consultation closes on 20 December and more information can be found at www.greatercambridge.org.uk/making-connections-2021

The Cambridge Eastern Access consultation closes on 22 December and more information can be found at www.greatercambridge.org.uk/NewmarketRd2021

Green waste collection cancelled from mid-December to January

After local press reports of staff concerns and low morale at East Cambs Street Scene, we now hear that the decision has been made behind closed doors to cancel the green waste collection service from Monday 13 December to Friday 28 January inclusive. The Council's wholly-owned waste collection company told Councillors that it has been short staffed due to COVID-19 and the national shortage of HGV drivers. It says that 'it is currently recruiting for three HGV drivers, fast-tracking two employees to enable them to obtain their HGV licence and working with existing staff who want to obtain HGV licences in the future'. In the meantime, residents are told to reduce food waste, and that green waste can be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Witchford. We were surprised and disappointed to learn of the plan to stop green waste collections. We know this will be an unwanted inconvenience for residents. It will result in many more car journeys for those who have the means to take their garden waste to the nearest recycling centre but this is not an option for all. As opposition councillors we first learnt of the ECSS HGV driver shortage in a whistleblowing story in the Ely Standard. That story also raised worrying claims of low staff morale. The council's administration needs to be much more open and transparent about the issues faced at ECSS and develop a comprehensive plan to address them.

Christmas waste collection dates

Over the Christmas periods, collection dates change:

w/c 20 December – collections will be a day earlier than usual (or the previous Saturday if the normal collection is Monday)

w/c 27 Dec – apart from Monday, all collections will be a day later than usual. Collections normally due on Monday 27, will be collected on Friday 24.

w/c 3 Jan – collections will be 2 days later than usual (with Friday 7 collected on Monday 10)

w/c 10 Jan – collections will be a day later than usual

Citizen's Advice Bureau West Suffolk

The grant to CAWS is to continue for another two years, which is good news for all our residents.

Mepal Outdoor Centre to be demolished by Christmas

East Cambridgeshire District Council leadership's Christmas present to local residents is the wrecking ball due to be sent in to the Mepal Outdoor Centre in the week beginning 6 December. The Council's current leadership is pressing ahead with its plans for an unwanted and unnecessary crematorium on the site, despite the fact that only thirteen per cent of local residents supported the idea. The

Council has already admitted that the crematorium proposal is intended to take financial contributions from developers intended to improve facilities for local residents, and turn them into ready cash to subsidise council tax.

Retirement Village, Bottisham Appeal (APP/V0510/W/21/3282241)

We have submitted our representation to the Planning Inspectorate urging the Inspector to dismiss the appeal over the Council's refusal of the application for a retirement village on land to the rear of 163 To 187 High Street, Bottisham. Anyone wanting a copy of our representation is welcome to email charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk for one, or write to 34 Swaffham Road, Reach, CB25 0HZ.

Trading Company repayments to Combined Authority slip

All but one of the five housing loans from the Combined Authority is proceeding in line with the revised COVID-19 programme approved by the Board in August 2020. That exception is the East Cambs Trading Company loan on the MOD site at Ely, where the projected repayment profile is slipping behind that anticipated.

The Combined Authority says: "This is for two reasons. There is still a delay in the sale of the 15 affordable housing units in the scheme. We are advised that this is expected to be resolved and the substantial capital payment received from the sale of those units now before end January 2022. We will continue to monitor the progress of that transaction.

The second reason is a slower than projected rate of sale of the market units over the past eight months. The loan is due to be re-paid by no later than 31st March 2023 and we will continue to monitor ECTC's performance closely to meet that deadline. There are currently four market units reserved and going through the acquisition process and three unit sales have completed in the last month. Receipts from those reservations will help stop the anticipated repayment profile falling even further behind from what was originally projected, but more and accelerated sales rates are required to catch up.

For the avoidance of any doubt ECTC are not defaulting on the loan. A default will only occur if the loan is not re-paid in full by 31st March 2023. We will continue to monitor and report to Housing Committee on the progress of the repayments."

We have been continuing to press for information about the resolution of this delay.

Cycling & Walking strategy

The Council's Finance & Assets Committee has agreed a Cycling & Walking Strategy, which arises from the consultation carried out at the start of the pandemic in March to May 2020. The Council intends to use the Strategy to try to influence County Council and Combined Authority plans for active travel.

The priority routes identified in the report include:

- Fordham-Burwell (cycling and walking)*
- Burwell-Exning-Newmarket (cycling Burwell-Newmarket, walking Exning)
- Lode-Waterbeach (cycling)
- Fordham-Soham (cycling)
- Burwell-Swaffham Prior (cycling)*
- Reach-Burwell (cycling)*

The asterisks indicate projects for which the Council has commissioned Sustrans to produce feasibility studies for cycling routes. Of these, Swaffham Prior-Reach-Burwell is being treated as one scheme.

Business Growth Fund

The District Council is launching a 'Business Growth Fund' to use up remaining monies granted by the Government to support businesses during COVID-19. The Council has £616,425 left, and will be inviting applications for up to £30,000—not from businesses that are still struggling, but from businesses that want to 'accelerate growth and long term sustainability'. The grant scheme and criteria will be advertised on the Council's website and the deadline for applications will be 5:00PM on Wednesday 12 January 2022.

Meet your councillors

We will be holding our virtual surgery via Zoom from 6:30 to 7:30PM on Wednesday 19 January 2022. Please contact Charlotte at charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk to book your timeslot.



And finally, season's greetings from both of us, with best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy 2022.

Cllr Charlotte Cane & Cllr John Trapp
District Councillors for the Bottisham ward