



LANGWORTH GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the grouped parishes of Barlings, Newball, Stainton by Langworth and Reasby

Notes of the Langworth Group Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6th of December 2016 in the Memorial Hall, Langworth

Present: Councillors' Miss A Gould, Mrs C King, Mr J Machin, Mr P Bowser, Mr C Buttress, Mrs S Burnett, Mrs H Walker, County Councillor Mr I Fleetwood, District Councillors' Mrs Anne Welburn, Mrs Maureen Palmer, Mr Chris Darcel & Parish Clerk Mrs M Soroka.

Clerk opened the meeting by advising the Parish Council that as both Chairlady & Vice- Chairman had given their apologies they would need to propose & second an acting Chairman.

Cllr Buttress proposed that Cllr Gould chair the meeting, seconded by Cllr King.

88 16/17 PUBLIC FORUM

No Members of the Public attending

89 16/17 APOLOGIES

Chairlady Y Green, Vice Chairman Herbert – Absence explained and accepted by the PC. Cllr Walker running late.

90 16/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

91 16/17 MINUTES

Amended minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 1st of November, agreed by PC, proposed by Cllr C Buttress seconded by Cllr C King.

92 16/17 PLANNING

a) Planning Application **134977** PROPOSAL: Planning application to change the use of the land to site 10 No caravans for holiday occupation between 1st March and 30th November and to store them in situ From 1st December to the end of February. Cllr King advised that she had spoken to the neighbours who could be affected to make sure they were aware of the application. No comments or objections.

b) Planning Application **135047**: notification of planning permission granted. Chair advised that the original application had not been received by the Parish Council, the Clerk had therefore contacted WLDC who apologised that their automatic system had not generated a letter. **Resolved:** WLDC will endeavour to check that all applications are sent out & Clerk to provide Cllrs with a link so that they can check the weekly planning lists.

7.45pm Cllr Walker arrived.

c) Procedure for Dealing with Planning Applications: As Vice Chairman Herbert is preparing the document and was not present, the PC **Resolved:** Agenda Jan Meeting.

93 16/17 POLICE MATTERS - REPORT OF LOCAL INCIDENTS

Local incidents read out by Chair: Nov total number of incidents = 7, including 1 domestic, 1 drugs, 1 suspicious, 2 RTC & 2 traffic offences. Chair brought the PC's attention to an email forwarded to them on 31/10/2016 requesting that they inform D/Cllr Darcel what information they wished to see in police reports to enable him to continue discussions with the Police.

94 16/17 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Chair advised that D/Cllrs' Welburn & Palmer's report (Appendix 1) had been forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting & asked if anyone would like to raise any points in regard to the report. No points raised.

D/Cllr Welburn added an update on devolution, advising of 8 of the District Councils voted for it with 1 District Council & Lincolnshire County Council voted against. The Districts are meeting on the 22nd to look at whether they can do something together & WLDC will be consulting with the Councils in due course.

D/Cllr Darcel had nothing to add.

95 16/17 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

C/Cllr Fleetwood stated Environment agency has promised to do de-bushing Barlings between the Bridge and Short Ferry. Progress is coming from meeting. Cllr Richard Davies has said that work to upgrade the Kennel Lane junction is imminent & Eastern bypass contract has been awarded & work due to start in June 2017.

96 16/17 REPORTS & CORRESPONDANCE

a) **Internal Auditor's Report:** Report read out by the Chair (Appendix 2) & updated the PC on changes already made. Chair suggested that Clerk looks into the cost of buying the Arnold Baker book of Local Council Administration referenced by the auditor, this was proposed by Cllr Buttress and seconded by Cllr Burnett.

The Chair also advised Cllrs on the topic of the Clerks expenses being a much larger amount than the amount claimed by the previous Clerk, stating that the previous Clerk worked for 3 PC's and split utility costs etc. between the 3. The present Clerk has expenses set at £45 per month, this includes utility's mobile phone contract & broadband costs. Any additional expense would be for the mileage covered for Clerk's duties & is logged and signed off. Cllr King confirmed that she checks all receipts etc. in her duty as a signatory.

b) **Emergency Plan** – Cllr King proposed that the next phase of training be booked for the 12th of January 2017, agreed by the PC & seconded by Cllr Buttress.

c) **Defibrillator:** Chair read the PC an email from WLDC advising of any ongoing costs involved should the PC purchase a defibrillator. Cllr King suggested that the local LIVES responder attends a meeting to demonstrate. **Resolved:** LIVES responder to attend Jan 2017 PC Meeting. Proposed by Cllr Burnett, seconded by Cllr Bowser.

d) **Resident's email:** PC agreed to move item to 11b as connected to precept.

e) **Holocaust Memorial Day:** The PC discussed whether to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, although regarded as an important time the PC decided that this would not be commemorated as it would set a precedent to commemorate other such times and this was not viable for the Parish Council. **Resolved:** No further action

f) **NCS Programme:** Update provided to the PC on works carried out by the NCS group. Project now completed. Cllr Burnett advised the PC that the NCS group had fund raised £400 for the church. Cllr Buttress proposed that the leftover paint remains with the Clerk until required, Seconded by Cllr Machin. **Resolved:** No further action.

97 16/17 Highways

Chair reminded Cllrs of Noel Robinson's (Highways) visit in May then read his email in response to Clerk's email requesting a date of when the remaining slurry seal works were to be done. In His response Mr Robinson stated that the work would be postponed until the next financial year. **Action:** Clerk to send formal letter to concerned resident advising of Mr Robinson's reply. Proposed by Cllr Buttress, seconded by Cllr King. **Resolved:** Clerk to email Mr Robinson in the New Year to get a definitive date for works.

98 16/17 Memorial Hall Play Area

Chair reported back to the PC on her discussions with Ed at EKN Ltd and his findings on inspecting the play equipment. An email received from Ed at EKN was read to Cllrs giving findings and quotes for repair. Chair also advised that the Play inspector now uses the checklist that the PC provided. Two of the issues being picked up on the monthly inspections are the exposed tree stumps & mole hills, the chair addressed this and suggested the clerk obtain 3 quotes for the stump removal. This was proposed by Cllr Burnett and seconded by Cllr Bowser. Chair proposed that clerk obtain 2 further quotes for slide repairs, seconded by Cllr Burnett. PC agreed to Cllrs' Machin & Bowser to look at equipment to see if there is an easier more cost effective solution & Cllr Buttress to set mole traps within the area affected. **Resolved:** Agenda for Jan meeting for updates.

8.45pm D/Cllr Darcel, D/Cllr Palmer, D/Cllr Welburn & C/Cllr Fleetwood left the meeting

99 16/17 FINANCE

a) Accounts for Payment

(Listed below & emailed to Cllrs prior to meeting)

Lonsdale Direct Solutions (Langworth Local) - £82.20

Glendale Countryside (Grass Cutting) - £352.50

Welton PC (Nov play inspection) - £20.00

Clerk's expenses November - £58.95

(Including phone, utilities & Mileage)

M Soroka reimbursement: Incidental Expenses - £24.86

(Including postage & stationary)

Clerk's December Salary/pension contributions (post-dated)

Accounts for payment agreed, proposed by Cllr King, seconded by Cllr Buttress.

b) Precept

Chair referred back to item 8d on the agenda, resident's letter (Appendix 3). All Cllrs received a copy of the email prior to the meeting and the email was also read out with points being discussed and debated.

Chairlady asked for the Clerk to talk on this matter as she had more in depth knowledge, The clerk then advised that after the annual audit the notice of conclusion states "documents are available on reasonable

notice by applying to the named person”, in this case the Clerk. This notice is displayed on the website & noticeboards.

The Clerk went on to state that invoices are still to be received until the new financial year, some funds are held for specific use & as yet unspent grants are to be held the reserves held by the PC could not be 100% accurate, however, had been worked out to around £9,000.

The Chair then advised that during the last meeting the PC had agreed £18,269 to be allocated in total to precepted items.

The Chair then read out 3 scenarios produced by the Clerk which had been sent out to Cllrs prior to the meeting stating a) the cost to residents if precepting the full amount) if wishing to use reserves and have **no** additional cost to residents & c) if precepting the same amount as last year & having to make up with reserves due to cuts in funding from WLDC & LCC.

The PC debated and discussed in length the best way forward. There were concerns that if the PC used reserves, in future years they would not be available & parishioners would incur higher rises or more severe cuts.

Cllr Buttress proposed that reserves are used and the amount precepted would not incur any additional expense to parishioners, this was seconded by Cllr Walker. A vote then took place by a show of hands for the proposal. The vote was unanimously in favour of the proposal.

100 16/17 ACTION LOG REVIEW

The log was reviewed & updated accordingly.

101 16/17 COMMENTS FROM VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Gould thanked everyone for their patience in her acting Chair for the meeting and wished all a Merry Christmas.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 3rd of January 2017

Appendix 1

Report for Parish Councils - Dec 2016

Cllrs M Palmer and A Welburn

There is little news to report at this time of year, discussion still goes on about next steps after the Combined Authority vote was vetoed by 2 councils - LCC and SK but it is not yet dead as the other councils involved are looking at several options including resubmission of an application for a combined authority of the Districts or Unitaries on one sort or another, more news will be available after 22nd Dec.

West Lindsey offer a range of paid for services and leaflets will be distributed or you can find information on the web site but for those councils lucky enough to own their own office the new services include fire safety testing which can sometimes be difficult to obtain for small buildings.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Productive 2017.

Appendix 2

to the Chairperson
Langworth Group Parish Council

I have carried out the interim internal Audit of the Council Accounts to the 30th September 2016.

I am pleased to note that the recommendations I made in my last audit have been taken on board. Further to my last letter after the internal audit of the Year End accounts 2015 / 2016 I would appreciate a copy of any correspondence you have received as a Council from the External Auditors.

I would like to raise the following matters with the Council from the interim audit I have carried out today:

1 – Far too many items being discussed under “closed session”. Having consulted with the Arnold Baker Local Council Administration book and with LALC I would like to draw your attention to the following:

“A meeting of the Council must be open to the public and the press. They can be excluded only by a resolution if publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for some other reason stated in the resolution and arising out of the business to be transacted. The power to exclude is not exercisable generally but only for a particular occasion.” (Arnold Baker)

I note that this year alone you have moved to closed session to discuss: how to promote the PC, audit issues, advice from Alan Robinson, how changes should be made to the minutes / notes of the meetings, how resident complaints should be dealt with, when the Chair can correspond with the Clerk, co-option of a new councillor, adoption of a HR committee, further meetings with Mr Robinson.

All of the above items should have been discussed in public forum as none of it would have “prejudiced the public interest”. You have to be very careful under transparency regulations that everything dealt with by the Parish Council is open to the public.

The above items could have been dealt with under Chairlady’s comments or as a separate item on the agenda.

Of particular interest to me has been the way in which my previous letter has been dealt with. It is not detailed in the minutes at all. The points I raised were very important and do not seem to have been brought into the public forum. An item under “closed session” to say “Audit issues discussed and PC agreed to sign off” is not acceptable under transparency regulations.

Any staffing issues can, and should, be dealt with under a “closed session”.

2 – I note that the budget column on the Clerk’s spreadsheet is currently empty – I would suggest that the column is filled in using the Precept figures. This means that the Council can keep an eye on actual spend against budgeted spend.

3 – The precepted amount for the Clerk’s expenses has doubled since the last Clerk was in place (i.e. 2015 / 2016). Already more than half of the budget has been spent – this is something that the Council needs to be aware of and monitor over the rest of the year.

4 – The Chair made a claim on expenses in May for £21.00 although no further information was supplied. All councillors (as well as the Clerk) must detail their expenses. The Clerk does this already, detailing mileage (including individual destinations) and who phone calls have been made to. This provides an adequate audit trail.

5 – I note that Alan Robinson suggested that Councillors and the Clerk attend training courses when they can. There is a Clerk’s course coming up on the 3rd November in Nettleton – there are still places available if the Clerk is able to attend. The new list of courses will be published very soon and I suggest that both the Clerk and Councillors try and attend all relevant ones.

Appendix 3

Hi Maxine.

Would you please thank the Parish Council for the detailed breakdown of proposed Precept in this month’s Langworth Local.

I was interested to read that a decision is still to be made on whether to increase the Precept or use some of the existing reserves. I am unable to ascertain how much the reserves are but the Accounts for 2015 show a cash figure of circa £10k. How much of this is reserves, I cannot tell.

So this brings me to ask, why should we increase the Precept when funds are in hand.

In addition, I find it strange that a figure of £1,500 is included for incidental expenses (one councillor voted against this) when surely the reserves could be used for this purpose.

As a rate payer I can see no reason why this Parish Council should increase its Precept.

I feel that the total amount of reserves should be made available to the public for transparency purposes.