

LONGNEY AND EPNEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11th January 2016

A meeting of **LONGNEY AND EPNEY PARISH COUNCIL** was held on Monday 11th January 2016.

PRESENT:

Cllr. Godwin (RG)
Cllr. Harvie (JH)
Cllr. Wingrove (GW)
Cllr. Russel (AR)
District Cllr Dave Mossman/Stroud District Council (DM)
Clerk Nikki Leach (NL)
One resident

1. APOLOGIES:

Cllr. Rebecca Christian (RC)
Cllr. Blackburn
PC Jenny Fraser / PC Manja Turner

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA: Cllr. Wingrove and Cllr. Godwin both declared their position as school governor.

3. THE MINUTES of the meeting of Monday 9th November 2015 were taken as read. The addendum discussed in the previous meeting was signed and dated as agreed in the last meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING:

Canal and Rivers Trust – Stan Waddington's name is to be completed in the previous minutes. The meeting arranged by Cllr. Blackburn has taken place with the Severn Voice representatives and Mark Hawthorn leader of the Council, Will Windsor Cabinet member for fire, police and infrastructure and Stan Waddington environment scrutiny committee. The meeting went well and it was felt as though they were willing to listen, they asked for a precis of the wish list to include in their letter to CART. This has been completed. Cllr. Godwin will forward the precis to the PC and also to Cllr. Mossman. A response has not yet been received in relation to this email.

Cllr. Wingrove asked about the timings of the automation and if there was an update on this. The trial at Sandfield bridge is underway at present and is due to continue for January and February. This is one of the points that has been raised in the precis mentioned earlier as it is felt this trial should be conducted in one of the busier months of the year in order to demonstrate a fairer representation of the traffic. It has also been asked that all of the subcommittees for each bridge be set up and all infrastructure be put in place before the next series of bridge trials begin.

The financial position in relation to the planned automation was discussed. The financial argument still does not seem to have much strength. Cllr. Harvie is still willing to keep following up in relation to the freedom of information request regarding the financial position.

Cllr. Wingrove has asked about the pothole on Park End bridge, there was a lack of clarity as to whether CART were responsible for filling this or if Amey were responsible. The pothole has now been filled.

Broadband update – Longney and parts of Epney now have access to fibreoptic broadband. The press release on Friday evening gave the impression that Elmore will not be having access to fibreoptic broadband which is not the message that was initially presented by BT. There was never any intention to take the cable down to Elmore. Apparently there were not enough house numbers to make it viable. This news was presented for the first time on Friday night. There is a possibility that a subsidy will be provided/offered to homeowners in Elmore to allow them to access the faster broadband through a wireless option via satellite. There are problems with the installation of the cable from Saul which is delaying parts of Epney.

A member of the parish asked for clarification as to how to obtain access to the new broadband. A number of service providers were discussed and the parishioner was advised to look at the options available.

Action: Clerk to ensure that Stan Waddington's name has been added to the minutes of the November meeting.

5. POLICE REPORT: PC Fraser is leaving the area as of this month and has not sent an update in advance of this meeting.

The relocation of officers has meant that they are unable to send officers to the meetings.

Two incidents have been reported in the area recently, both at equine yards.

Cllr. Wingrove mentioned that the Gloucestershire Police facebook site has updates regarding local incidents.

Manja has contacted the PC regarding Rural watch. A number of councilors have signed up to this and a notice will be added to the website to ensure that all parishioners can get access.

Cllr. Harvie commented that the issues with the cyclists are still continuing. Overtaking is a serious problem and it is dangerous.

Cllr. Mossman suggested contacting Martin Searle in relation to these issues.

Action: Cllr. Wingrove agreed to draft a letter to the police regarding non attendance/updates at meetings. Cllr. Harvie agreed to draft the letter regarding the cyclists. Both letters to be sent by the Clerk. Clerk to arrange for the information regarding Rural Watch to be added to the website.

6. PLANNING:

New applications have been received for:

Longney Primary School – Single storey extension – approval has been given for this application

Ellis House – Side extension, first floor only – pending consideration

An appeal has been launched regarding the application at Severnside Park in Epney due to the length of time the planning committee have taken to come back regarding a decision.

The application at Astmans Farm is still outstanding and has been for some time.

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter has been received from Lakefield Cof E primary school to advise that they are planning to convert to academy status. The letter was received today and will be scanned by the Clerk and emailed to the PC.

Action: Clerk to scan letter and send to PC.

8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Please see attached emails.

9. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Cllr Mossman provided an update on current issues:

There is a proposal to increase the council tax by 1.99%. The government have issued new financial figures and assumed a 2% increase. It is highly likely that the 2% rise will stand. There is also an increase in the elderly care budget by 2%. If this happens the band D council tax will increase by around £40 per year. This all relates to council cutbacks in budgets. It is hoped that Parish Councils and Town Councils will try to hold their Precepts at the current rate so that it does not draw further from the budget.

10. VILLAGE PLAN:

- Garden Group/Equipment: No update. Clerk to contact Al Fenn to ask if there is any activity regarding the use of the equipment.
- Highway Maintenance: Cllr. Wingrove commented that a meeting has taken place regarding the ditch at Downend Barn. There is no funding available for a drainage system to be installed there for 2 years. Highways do not see it as a Highways problem, it is a drainage problem and they have asked the resident of the barn if he is prepared to contribute to the cost to allow it to take place sooner. The resident has declined. Cllr. Mossman suggested talking to the Clerk at Hardwicke regarding the flooding in Church Lane and how the solution was reached to see if this could help. Cllr. Mossman suggested that Highways may be responsible for this issue and this was supported by Cllr. Godwin as they were responsible for installing the pipe, although this has been disputed by Highways. Cllr. Wingrove will engage with Highways again in relation to this.
- Oil Purchase Scheme: No update at present.
- Website: Bekki Christian and Nathan Mills have kindly agreed

to continue supporting the website. Clerk to send updates following the meetings.

- Newsletter: The latest version of the newsletter was sent just recently. A note of thanks was recorded for Geoff and Judy Smith for the work that they have done so far in getting the e-news up and running. A notice was posted in the recent newsletter regarding a request for a volunteer to provide a few hours a month to support with the editing and distribution of the newsletter.

Action: Clerk to contact Al Fenn to ask for an update on the use of the garden group equipment.

Clerk to contact Kevin, Clerk of Hardwicke PC for information regarding the flooding in Church Lane.

Cllr. Wingrove to communicate with Highways again regarding Downend Barn.

11. FLOOD RISK

Cllr. Godwin has emailed the PC regarding flood risk. In response to the recent flooding in other parts of the country over the Christmas period, Cllr. Godwin spoke to David Lesser, Water Resources Engineer, regarding flood prevention measures and whether he would come and talk to the Parish regarding measures that could be taken for homes to prevent flooding. There are many measures that people could take to plan for flood prevention, filling sandbag should be one of the last resorts. If a wider audience could be gathered, a larger meeting could be arranged to include other villages, for example, Fretherne, Saul, and Framilode. It has been suggested that a drop in day or evening could be arranged and David could arrange for some of the relevant manufacturers to attend and provide information. So far Hardwicke have said that they would be interested, a response is awaited from the other parishes within Severn Voice. There are some high tides expected in the next few months and it would be good to have the meeting in advance of these tides.

Cllr. Mossman suggested that the residents of Longford and Tewkesbury may be interested in hearing some of these strategies, Cllr. Godwin felt that this may be outside of the remit of our meeting and it should be for our parishioners and local villages.

Cllr. Wingrove asked about the status of the eel passes in the tidal flaps. Cllr. Godwin said that the timeline has been extended for the next 10 years to allow the Internal Drainage Board time to raise the money.

12. AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SMALL COUNCILS

It was agreed that we would opt in to the agreed arrangements for smaller councils. No action needs to be taken and we will be allocated an auditor at the appropriate time.

13. AREA OF PRIME RESPONSIBILITY:

Cllr. Harvie updated the council and will circulate the email with the recent progress.

Action: Cllr. Harvie to forward the email to the rest of the council.

14. NEW SEVERN ESTUARY FLOOD RISK STRATEGY: Cllr. Godwin confirmed that there is no update at present. The new document is supposed to be available this spring but it does not look likely that this will happen.

15. FOOTPATHS: Cllr. Harvie has received an email from the public rights of way inspection officer for Amey and she will look into the two footpaths where concerns have been raised. Cllr. Harvie will provide an update if any is received.

.16. PRECEPT 2016/2017

Cllr. Godwin proposed that we leave the Precept request as it is for 2016/2017, this was seconded by Cllr. Russell. Cllr. Wingrove raised the issue of the Clerks salary as it was agreed that this would be discussed at the end of the first year. This will be discussed at a later date.

Action: Clerk to submit the Precept request by 01-Feb-2016.

17. FINANCIAL UPDATE: The current financial status was shared. Balance of accounts at present:

Current Account: £11,166.31

Deposit Account: £2,404.52

Cheques approved for payment:

Clerks Fees: £375 (£300 to Clerk, £75 income tax) Proposed by Cllr. Russell, seconded by Cllr. Harvie

Income Tax: £130 for cancelled cheque September 2015 Proposed by Cllr. Russell, seconded by Cllr. Harvie

Cllr. Godwin asked if there was a way of earning any more interest on the money held in the accounts and if the money could be invested elsewhere. Cllr. Mossman said that if that more than 2 thirds of the councilors have been elected, and if the Clerk has the CILCA qualification, you can obtain the general certificate of confidence and this allows you freedom to invest the money as seen fit. Cllr. Mossman will check to see if there is any guidance in regard to this for councils who do not have the general certificate of confidence.

18. ELECTORS' FORUM:

No matters were raised.

19. OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

Bekki Christian has agreed to resume her activities as a Parish Councillor. The council expressed their delight at having her back.

Cllr. Godwin asked Cllr. Mossman for clarification regarding elections this year. All councilors, including district councilors, will have to stand for election again this year. The same will apply for Parish Councilors. This means that in May there will be an election for the PC. The Annual Parish Meeting cannot be held until all councilors are elected. All councilors need to submit their nomination forms, 30 days before the election.

Cllr. Russell asked about the process for any resident who would like to be part of the Parish Council. Cllr. Godwin explained that any applicant should contact the Clerk who will obtain the nomination forms.

Action: Clerk to obtain the nomination forms and send them to all the councilors. Cllr. Mossman suggested the Clerk should contact Democratic services at SDC. 01453 754351 – Judy Balfe.

THE CHAIRMAN thanked all Councilors and residents for attending the meeting.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of Longney and Epney Parish Council will take place at 8.00pm on Monday 14th March 2016 at Longney School

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.36.

