

# Little Thetford Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council, held  
Virtually by Zoom on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7.32pm



**Present:** Cllr James (Chairman), Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Clark, Cllr Stubbs, Cllr Lamb, Cllr Kilby

**Locum Clerk:** Libby White

Cllr Bill Hunt

7 members of the public

## 20/53 Election of Chairman

Cllr Mitchell informed all present that she will be stepping down from the role. She stated that she felt she had been treated unfairly and has found the role stressful and does not feel the role is right for her. She stated it would be better suited to someone with more time.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Lamb, seconded by Cllr Clark and **RESOLVED** that Cllr James be elected as Chairman for the next 12 months.

**CARRIED**  
**1 abstention**

Cllr Stubbs expressed thanks to Cllr Mitchell for all her work as Chairman through a very difficult time and stressed how well it had been handled.

Cllr James took his role as Chairman and thanked again, Cllr Mitchell for all she had done.

It was **noted** that the Declaration of Office had been sent to all and Cllr James would print and sign the document before returning to the Locum Clerk.

## 20/54 Election of Vice-Chairman

It was **proposed** by Cllr James, seconded by Cllr Clark and **RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote that Cllr Kilby be re-elected as Vice-Chairman.

It was **noted** that the Declaration of Office for Vice-Chairman had been sent to all and Cllr Kilby would print and sign the document before returning to the Locum Clerk.

## 20/55 To receive and accept apologies for absence

None.

## 20/56 Councillors' Declarations of Interest

*Declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda:* Cllr Stubbs sits on the planning Committee at ECDC

*Requests to speak:* none required

*To receive requests for dispensations:* None

*Grant of dispensations:* None.

## 20/57 Public and Press Participation Session (10mins)

One resident addressed the Council about a headstone they would like installed in the cemetery, which would be more colourful than usual as it is for a child. It was confirmed that this would be discussed under item 20/64

## 20/58 Approval of Minutes

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 were circulated prior to the meeting and approved for signature with a couple of changes to items addressed by Cllr Stubbs in emails prior to the meeting. The minutes would be printed by the Locum Clerk to be provided to the Chairman for signature.

### b. **Matters Arising**

It was noted that several companies are now looking at improvement works at the playground. Designs should be forthcoming shortly.

The Locum Clerk noted that though there was no basketball net on the post anymore, the post is stable and it may be prudent to reinstate a net for the older children (comments were made that there is not so much for them to do when asking about the playground).

c. **Clerk's Report**

It was noted that the water meter at the cemetery has been accessed and a reading has been provided to the water company (not done for several years).

The fence at the Conservation Area has now been fixed.

420 trees have been ordered from the Woodland Trust for delivery in November.

**C Cllr Hunt's Report (omitted from Agenda)**

C Cllr Hunt expressed his thanks to Charlotte for her time as Chairman. He provided a report which covered the following:

- There are over 700 children being looked after and the council is looking for foster carers.
- Most shielded residents have been contacted.
- All care agencies are being paid an extra 10% on their fees.
- Histon Road will have some extensive work on it and will eventually have a dedicated bus lane and 2 dedicated cycle ways but residents should expect delays.
- Confirmed that the A14 is open.
- Pressing Highways to replace a removed tree with two rather than one (one at the same location from where removed and one where you would like it). Prices have been negotiated with Barcham and John Clarke is the person at CCC to find prices.
- Household recycling centre open again and it would be prudent to have ID to prove Cambs resident.
- He stressed that Cllr Stubbs had provided a very comprehensive report circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.
- He said how well the bin men have done during the virus considering some of the personal circumstances they find themselves in.
- ECDC is not experiencing the losses other District Councils are experiencing with losses over car park income.
- ECDC has given over £12m in grants to local businesses and giving out the Government money as quickly as they can.
- CAB had offices in Market Street which belonged to ECDC. All operations taken in house to ECDC and will be renting out the old offices.

Cllr Stubbs had only 2 further points to raise:

- Bus walk cycle consultation has been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> May and may be more important now as people think of life differently due to the ongoing outbreak.
- ECDC can now demonstrate a 6.6 year supply of building land which is important as the village envelopes are now reinstated in the villages.

## 20/59 Finance Matters

- a. The Locum Clerk presented the Asset Register for review by Council members. It was agreed that the Asset Register was current and up to date.
- b. Section 1 'Annual Governance Statement 2019/20' of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was presented and read to Cllrs by the Locum Clerk. The assembled Council members answered accordingly and the Locum Clerk completed the form prior to signature. Due to the ongoing outbreak, the forms would be printed straight away and then arrangements would be made for the Chairman to countersign at the earliest opportunity.  
**Action:** Locum Clerk to print and arrange signature.
- c. Section 2 'Accounting Statements 2019/20' of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was presented by the Locum Clerk. It was **proposed** by Cllr Kilby, seconded by Cllr Stubbs and **RESOLVED** by a unanimous vote to approve the Accounting Statements for 2019/20. Arrangements would be made for the

It was also recommended to install a concrete stab under the net.

Chairman to countersign at the earliest opportunity.

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to print and arrange signature.*

- d. The Bank Reconciliation had been circulated to council members prior to the meeting. The Locum Clerk noted that the Practitioners Guide for 2020, which provides guidance on managing risk of the Council, suggests that reserves for a 'smaller' council be closer to 12 months precept rather than the current 6 months set aside by Little Thetford. It was **agreed** that 12 months reserves be earmarked from monies held.

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to update records.*

- e. All invoices were circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Stubbs and Cllr Clark had reviewed the invoices and were happy that all was in order and the invoices could be paid.

**Action:** *Cllr Stubbs and Cllr Clark to approve online payments.*

- f. It was **noted** by the Locum Clerk that due to postal delays, the account for the water has occasionally been late in being paid. It was suggested that it may be prudent to set up a Direct Debit. After a brief discussion it was agreed to sign the Direct Debit mandate for the cemetery's water supply.

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to send completed mandate to the water company. 2 Cllrs to sign.*

## **20/60 Review of Committees and Working Groups**

- a. After a short discussion, it was **agreed** to set up an Employment Committee (SO5j v)
- b. It was **noted** that Terms of Reference should be in place for the Employment Committee, but Cllr James asked that these be reviewed by the Employment Committee with input from the HR Adviser LTPC have been employing (SO5j vi)

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to speak with Human Capital*

- c. Members appointed to the Employment Committee as follows (SO5j vii):  
Cllr Clark, Cllr Kilby and Cllr Mitchell

## **20/61 Review and Adoption of Statutory Documents, Appointments and Policies**

- a. It was **noted** that there had been no advised changes to Standing Orders since their adoption in November 2019. It was agreed that the Standing Orders are sufficient for the needs of the Council. (SO5j ix)
- b. It was **noted** that there had been no advised changes to Financial Regulations since their adoption in November 2019. It was agreed that the Standing Orders are sufficient for the needs of the Council. (SO5j ix)
- c. It was **agreed** that the Locum Clerk be appointed RFO. (FR1.8)
- d. It was **noted** that Cllr Stubbs, Cllr Clark and Cllr Kilby remain as bank signatories on all bank accounts (FR 6.4)
- e. The Locum Clerk advised that it would be prudent to have one further signatory to approve online payments through the Unity Account. It was **agreed** that Cllr James would be the third signatory. (FR 6.9)
- f. It was **agreed** to appoint Jacquie Wilson of Canalbs as Internal Auditor for 2020/21 (FR 2.5).  
**Action:** *Locum Clerk to write to Jacquie*
- g. It was **agreed** that all council meetings will continue on the second Wednesday of the month. It was also **agreed** that the agreement of dates would be held to the June meeting to include meetings of the Employment Committee. (SO5j xxi)  
**Action:** *Locum Clerk to bring meeting dates to next meeting*
- h. The Council's insurance cover was considered by members. After some discussion it was agreed to move the insurance to Came & Company. (FR 15 and SO5j xiv)  
**Action:** *Locum Clerk to arrange cover with Came & Company*
- i. It was **noted** that the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 totalled £200 for 2019/20.

## **Review of Policies and Procedures**

- j. The proposed Risk Management Policy as presented by the Locum Clerk was **agreed** for signature. This would be printed out for signature by the Chairman at the earliest

opportunity. (FR 17)

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to print out for Chairman's signature*

- k. A proposed Complaints Procedure had been circulated to Councillors by the Locum Clerk prior to the meeting. The Chairman noted that there had been another Complaints Procedure agreed late last year and asked it be carried to the June meeting. (SO5j xvi)

**Action:** *Chairman to forward the policy to the Locum Clerk.*

- l. It was **agreed** that the Publication Scheme (as based on the ICO's model document) be approved with no changes. (SO5j xvii)

- m. It was **agreed** that the proposed policy for dealing with the Press and Media be approved with no changes. A policy for dealing with social media would be considered at the June meeting. (SO5j xviii)

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to put together policy for Social Media*

- n. Following a short discussion, it was agreed that all employment policies and procedures would be carried to another meeting. (SO5j xix)

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to gather Policies for another meeting.*

- o. It was **agreed** to continue to hold the subscriptions currently held by the parish council with a view to look at what benefits the council receives from ACRE and invite them to a future meeting. It was **noted** that the council would pay for the Clerk's subscription to SLCC (when appointed) but should not pay for the ALCC membership. (SO5j xv)

## 20/62 Planning Matters

- a. 20/00454/FUL – single storey rear extension at 9 Palisade Court, Little Thetford

It was **agreed** that the parish council provide support to this development.

- b. 17/00732/DISA – To discharge Conditions 6 (Contamination) and 8 (Surface Water) of decision dated 14 June 2017 for construction of 4 bedroom, two storey detached dwelling at land parcel south east of Berrycroft, Redfen Road, Little Thetford

Councillors **noted** this application. No comments to be made.

- c. After a short discussion it was agreed that the only name the Council wished to put forward was '**Russell Court**'. It was noted that the name would commemorate someone who has worked tirelessly for the village in their lifetime: as a member of the parish council, a committee member for the Village Hall, volunteering and recently passed away due to the virus.

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to pass comments to the Street Naming team at ECDC*

## 20/63 Council Administration Matters

- a. Cllr James provided an update on the volunteer work being carried out in the village during the outbreak:

- 30-40 meals provided 3 times a week including 2 families as identified by the school;
- John Townsend Charity mobilised to support residents in need due to the virus;
- Survey being filled out in response to the virus;
- East Cambs newsletter will be delivered to every dwelling – Little Thetford featured;
- Will resurvey residents to check on changes of vulnerability of residents.

- b. The Village Hall car park was considered at length by members. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that a letter be written to the Sports and Social Club asking that the car park be opened immediately to provide access to the pre-school as they provide car for vulnerable children and children of key workers. It was also agreed to reiterate that the council would like to meet with the Sports and Social Club as soon as possible.

**Action:** *Locum Clerk to liaise with the Club.*

- c. The Wayleave at Holt Fen was considered by members. It was **noted** that the Wayleave for the previous owners did not automatically transfer to the new landowner. After some discussion it was **proposed** by Cllr James, seconded by Cllr Lamb and **RESOLVED** by a

unanimous vote that Cllr Clark and the Locum Clerk work on it and bring back to council.

**Action:** Cllr Clark and Locum Clerk to liaise with solicitor.

- d. It was **noted** that Cllr James would be in attendance at the CAPALC Conference as a director on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

#### 20/64 Cemetery Matters

- a. It was **noted** that tenders had been sent out to four companies for the work to be completed on the Cemetery Extension. Tenders were to be returned by 19<sup>th</sup> May for consideration.

**Action:** Locum Clerk to liaise with TGMS.

- b. The headstone for a child, as discussed under item 20/57 was considered by members. It was **noted** that the cemetery regulations needed to be updated as a matter of urgency. After lengthy discussion it was **agreed** in principal, but the council would need to see a design with material, size and colour detailed for final approval. Cllrs Clark and Lamb to visit Littleport Cemetery to look at the area they have set aside for children.

**Action:** Locum Clerk to update regulations and liaise with family.

#### 20/65 Date of Next Meeting

Date of Next Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Meeting closed at 10.24pm

Signed:  Date: 16 JUNE 2020

Chairman

Supplier	Inv No.	Inv Date	Cost Description	Net	VAT	Total	Notes
John Townsend Charity			Donation towards Coronavirus Help	£500.00	£ -	£500.00	Approved April
ROSPA	48024	17-Apr-20	Annual Playground Inspection	£ 96.50	£19.30	£115.80	
Mr J Skipper	2019	30-Apr-20	Grass Cutting	£424.00	£ -	£424.00	
LCR Magazine			Annual Subscription to LCR	£ 17.00	£ -	£ 17.00	
Mr J Skipper	2023	05-May-20	Balance - fencing in Conservation Area	£357.64	£ -	£357.64	
				<b>£1,395.14</b>	<b>£19.30</b>	<b>£1,414.44</b>	