

Lifton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely using Zoom on 25th February 2021

These minutes are provisional until they are agreed at the next meeting of the parish council; they will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

Present: Cllr C Edmonds (Chairman), Cllr Dunn, Cllr Elworthy, Cllr Glen, Cllr Lees, Cllr Measey and Cllr Sutton-Woodhouse

1. Apologies: Cllr Elias and Cllr Parsons

The Chairman paid tribute to Lifton Parish Council Vice-Chairman Brian Moore who sadly passed away recently. Cllr Moore had served on the Parish Council for 10 years missing only 2 meetings in that time; he was Secretary of the QEII Management Committee and was also on the village history group. Cllr Moore had been involved with many local projects from grass cutting to the village Christmas tree and his knowledge of the construction industry provided valuable input on planning applications. Cllr Moore had been a much-valued member of the Lifton community and will be greatly missed.

2. Minutes: The minutes of the PC meeting 28th January 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

3. Dispensations and Declarations of Interest: Cllr Elworthy and Cllr Lees declared an interest in item no. 8.1 - planning application: 0096/21/LBC.

4. Public Participation/Borough Cllr. Update

Public Participation: The applicant for planning application 0096/21/LBC attended the meeting and provided further details of the plans to separate part of the Lifton Hall Hotel building to create a new 3-bed holiday let. An old entrance doorway would be reinstated and an old stud wall in the vestibule would be removed. The work would allow greater flexibility for use of the space as not only extra accommodation but additional downstairs dining space when the holiday let was not in use.

Borough Councillor Update: WDBC had approved a balanced budget for 2021/22. There would be an increase in council tax to continue to provide and maintain council services. All elements of the council tax (including DCC, police and parish councils) would rise resulting in an overall increase of 4.99%.

The elections for DCC and the Police and Crime Commissioner would go ahead on 6th May 2021 and voting would take place in the usual way.

WDBC has agreed to amend charges in its pay and display car parks following a public consultation. Full details were available on its website.

5. General items:

5.1 Highways

The Clerk provided an update on the responses provided by DCC Highways in relation to several highways matters which had been reported online since the last meeting. Two DCC Highways temporary traffic notifications had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting; these were also published on the parish website.

Councillors raised concerns about the traffic cones and road signs at Fore Street, North Road and Duntz Hill. These had blown over in the recent high winds and were a potential danger to pedestrians. The Chairman agreed to raise this matter with the contractor responsible for the scheduled works in North Road.

Councillors asked the Clerk to report the drain at the bottom of Duntz Hill to Highways as water kept coming up and going across the road. The Chairman agreed to provide a photo to the Clerk in order to aid the reporting process.

Action: The Chairman to speak to the contractor regarding the fallen diversion road signs and traffic cones on North Road. The Clerk to submit an online report to Highways concerning the drain at the bottom of Duntz Hill.

5.2 Village Traffic

Cllr Lees raised concerns regarding the increase in speeding through the village from the direction of the A30 through to the village shop and towards Tinhay involving a mix of local vehicles and cars and lorries from both the Premier Foods and Mole Valley sites. There were also issues on North Road towards the school impacted by the parked vehicles making this a single-track road. Cllr Lees also felt that the construction traffic was not adhering to the speed restrictions along North Road.

Councillors were provided with the history of issues surrounding speeding that had been reported continuously to both DCC Highways and the local Police over the years. Previous requests to reduce the speed limits in certain areas in the village had been refused on the grounds that the speed data did not support either Councillors or the public perceptions of speeding.

The Clerk reported that in early 2020 Councillors had agreed to move the village speed sign from Liftdown to Tinhay. A police enforcement van was deployed to the village to monitor speeding and the local PCSO had shared details of the Community Speedwatch Scheme which was published on the parish website and village Facebook page. The speed signs can be moved to different locations around Lifton, Tinhay and Liftdown, but due to Covid restrictions this has not been possible in recent months.

In February 2020 the Police Camera Safety Partnership (CSP) Division said that they would arrange to install a Speed Data Recorder (SDR) in the village. Shortly afterwards, the whole country was placed into a national lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic. It is uncertain whether the CSP did in fact install a SDR in Lifton prior to the lockdown. The Clerk was asked to pursue this matter with the local PCSO and provide an update to Councillors at the next meeting.

Councillors asked the Clerk to contact DCC Highways to report the speeding along Fore Street, New Road and North Road. The Clerk was also asked to request a change to the current speed limit from 30mph to 20mph along North Road due to the increase in traffic and speeding near the school, doctor's surgery and the housing development.

Action: The Clerk to liaise with the local PCSO and DCC Highways as detailed above.

5.3 DALC: Remote meeting regulations and the future

Councillors received a copy of DALC's latest newsletter on remote meeting regulations and the sunset clause and what this means for parish council meetings from 7th May 2021. The newsletter was published prior to the Prime Minister's announcement detailing the roadmap out of the latest national lockdown.

The Clerk would await further guidance from both DALC and NALC before putting a proposal to Councillors on how future Parish Council meetings could be conducted.

Action: The Clerk to await further guidance from DALC and NALC before putting together a proposal for future meetings to Councillors.

5.4 Broadband Fibre Update

The Chairman read out the response he had received from the Fibre Enquiries Team at Openreach regarding the fibre upgrade for the village. The engineering will take place over the coming months and if everything goes to plan, fibre broadband should be available by the end of May 2021.

5.5 BT Telephone Kiosk

Councillors were informed that there had been no further update regarding the adoption of the BT telephone kiosk at Liftondown following the most recent BT consultation exercise that took place in October 2020. Councillors noted that the kiosk was in a poor state of repair but as it was still owned by BT, they were not in a position to do anything. The Clerk would update Councillors on any future follow up from BT.

5.6 Defibrillator Update

Councillor Measey confirmed that the regular checks on the village defibrillator were still being done with monthly reports submitted to the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust.

5.7 Premier Foods - Heritage Information Board

Councillors received a request from an agent working on behalf of Premier Foods regarding their new car park and whether the Parish Council would like to be involved in the design of a Heritage Information Board (planning permission 3557/17/FUL contained a condition relating to a Heritage Information Board). The agent asked if there was anyone with historic knowledge, old maps or old photographs.

Councillors agreed that the local History Group should be approached via their Chairman with a request to include input from Mr C Walters, who was also on this group. The History Group would be asked if they could put a small package together of local historic interest for the Parish Council to approve at their next meeting.

Action: The Clerk to liaise with the local History Group on the above request and report back to the next meeting.

5.8 Burial Ground

The Chairman reported that the Devon Campaign for Protection of Rural England has organised a competition to determine Devon's best churchyard 2021 and asked Councillors to discuss whether a submission should be made for Lifton's burial ground.

Councillors were informed that the judges are not seeking the most pristine or manicured churchyards, they are looking for those which are well-managed to provide a peaceful haven for people and wildlife.

Councillors discussed whether a submission should be made and whether a section at the top end of the burial ground could be set aside so that the grass be allow to grow to encourage wildlife. Cllr Edmonds suggested that he could look into setting aside some funds from his next WDBC locality budget to put some money towards some seeds and a birdbox to help create some bio-diversity.

Councillors also discussed using any leftover trees provided by The Woodland Trust for planting in this area of the burial ground along with the possible installation of a bench for people to quietly sit and enjoy this new area. Councillors were reminded that the Parish Council had a bench in storage that could be used along with a commemorative plaque from Queen's jubilee in 1977.

Councillors agreed to support this project and requested that an item be put on next months' agenda.

Councillors were asked to visit the proposed area in the burial ground and to have a think about what could be done. The Chairman agreed to liaise with the local contractor to seek his guidance on the specific area of the burial ground to be used; to contact the Headteacher at the village primary school to seek involvement from the local school children; and to liaise with Cllr Elias who had knowledge of horticulture.

The Clerk was asked to submit an entry form on behalf of Lifton Parish Council's burial ground.

Action: As detailed above. The Clerk to include a Burial Ground item on the March agenda.

5.9 North Road Development

Councillors were informed that a number of residents were extremely agitated and upset by the disturbances caused by the site traffic and the removal of soil from the North Road housing development. Councillors also expressed concerns about the suppliers to the construction site who were not using the designated site diversions and not adhering to the speed limits.

Councillors discussed the issues and the best options for keeping the residents that live along Old Tinhay and North Road updated on when there is likely to be additional disturbance. Councillors agreed that the Chairman and Cllr Dunn be the main points of contact between the site manager and local residents.

Councillors also agreed that the Clerk should write a letter to the housing developer to raise the concerns expressed both by the local residents and the Parish Council.

Action: The Chairman and Cllr Dunn to act as a point of contact between the site manager and local residents regarding future disruption. The Clerk to write a letter expressing the above concerns to the housing developer's main office.

6. Reports:

6.1 QE11 report: No update this month.

7. Finance

7.1 For payment

Clerk's salary for February £ 416.22

QEII Recreation Ground Committee
(payment of insurance received from Zurich for pavilion storm damage) £ 479.47

Proposed and seconded that all the above payments be made.

[Total payments: £ 895.69]

Action: Clerk to make all payments online.

7.2 Payment received:

Interest £ 0.09

7.3 Outstanding invoices: None

General matters relating to Finance:

7.4 Donation request from Lifton Church PCC re: maintenance of church clock

Councillors discussed the donation request that had been received from the Lifton Church PCC for a contribution towards the cost of maintenance of the church clock on the basis that it is a village facility. The annual maintenance has just been completed at a cost of £186.

Councillors were informed that a donation of £50.00 had been made by Lifton Parish Council in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Councillors agreed to make a donation of £100.00 towards this year's clock maintenance costs.

Action: The Clerk to pay a donation of £100.00 to Lifton Church PCC.

8.0 Planning

8.1 Applications:

0096/21/LBC - Listed Building Consent to separate part of the building, blocking off doors to create a 3-bedroom holiday let with a hallway/lounge, separate lounge and kitchen diner. Lifton Hall Hotel New Road Lifton PL16 ODR.

(Cllr Elworthy and Cllr Lees were removed from the meeting whilst this discussion took place as they had both declared an interest under item 3 on the agenda).

Councillors discussed the application and agreed that the proposed plans made good sense, would provide greater flexibility and would encourage more visitors into the village. They fully supported this application.

Proposed and seconded. PC decision: support (5); not support (0); abstain (0).

8.2 Approvals:

3920/20/CLE - Location: Car Park, Ambrosia Creamery Station Road Tinhay PL16 0BB. Application Type: Certificate of Lawfulness Existing Use. Proposal: Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing Use to establish development has commenced in accordance with condition 1 of planning permission 3557/17/FUL. Decision: Cert of Lawfulness (Existing) Certified

8.3 Refusals: None

General matters relating to planning:

8.4 There is no statutory consultation requirement on the applications below - the information is being sent for information only:

0375/21/COM - Application Type 28 (1 month) Communication PD Application. BT Pole WWLIFT-55-00 Footway at Arundell Close Lifton PL16 0DT. Notice of intention to amend the location of a telecommunications equipment cabinet (Approved 3782/20/COM).

9. Correspondence: Councillors received details about:
Western Power Distribution - ED2 Business Plan and Consultation

10. Councillors' items for future agenda: Village traffic, Burial Ground and North Road update.

Next Meeting: 7.00pm, Thursday, 25th March 2021 - via Zoom

Meeting closed at 21:19

SIGNED..... Date.....