

# Lifton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the QEII Pavilion (Recreation Ground, Leat Road)  
on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024

*These minutes are provisional until they are agreed and signed by the Chairman at the next meeting of the parish council*

**Present:** Cllr Edmonds (Chairman), Cllr Alexander, Cllr K Dunn, Cllr S Dunn, Cllr Gynn and Cllr Sutton-Woodhouse

- 1. Apologies:** Cllr Lees and Cllr Measey. Apologies were also requested by Cllr Glen; Councillors resolved to formally accept and approve Cllr Glen's absence.
- 2. Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.
- 3. Dispensations and Declarations of Interest:** None
- 4. Visiting/Guest Speakers:** None
- 5. Public Participation/Borough Cllr. Update:**

**Public Participation:** None

**Borough Cllr. Update:** Following another tragic accident that resulted in fatalities at the 'Iron Railings' location near Chillaton, a campaign to encourage road improvements in this area is being undertaken by WD Borough Councillors in those Wards affected. As Lifton residents were also regular users of this road, Cllr Edmonds was involved in a publicity campaign highlighting the safety issues for road users at this location.

The mobile phone mast at St Mary's Church will not be installed until April 2025 at the earliest as a result of supply issues with the equipment required. The WD Borough Council Ward Member, Cllr. Edmonds, has sent a letter of complaint about the delay to Vodaphone, copied to Network Solutions and the local MP; planning permission for the mast was granted back in 2017. Councillors agreed to put an item on the next PC agenda to discuss whether they should also send a letter of complaint about the delayed installation.

The QEII pavilion was subjected to some vandalism on Saturday night, some of the wooden balustrades along the entranceway ramp were kicked out along with some damage done to the seat in front of the pavilion. A local contractor has been contacted regarding a quote for repairs. The local neighbourhood beat manager and local PCSO have also been contacted and patrols in the area will be increased. There have been a couple of other anti-social behaviour incidents in the Parish recently.

Cllr Edmonds has been working with the parishes of Lewdown & Stowford regarding the introduction of a new charging structure in car park at Roadford Lake. The local MP also wrote to South West Lakes Trust who have justified the new charges and penalties.

## 6. General items:

### 6.1 Financial Regulations

NALC/DALC provided an updated version of the Financial Regulations earlier in the year. Councillors received a copy of the proposed financial regulations for Lifton Parish Council prior to the meeting and agreed that they should be adopted immediately.

**Motion: Councillors resolved to adopt the updated Financial Regulations with effect from 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Proposed; Seconded; All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

**Action:** The Clerk to publish the adopted Financial Regulations on the parish website.

Lifton Parish Council: Minutes of the Meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## 6.2 QEII Committee: Terms of Reference

**Councillors agreed to defer this item to a future PC meeting. Proposed; Seconded. All agreed.**

## 6.3 Highways Update including VAS funding

The Clerk provided a report to Councillors prior to the meeting which detailed highways matters that have been reported to or from Devon County Council Highways (or other departments) since the last meeting. Please see separate attachment 'Appendix A'.

In addition to the above, the following update was provided regarding the overgrown trees/vegetation on Fore Street that had been reported to DCC Highways on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024: Thank you for the email. Apologies for the delays with this.

The DCC Highways Officer inspected the location in August and from the perspective of highway obstruction, they did not consider it to be a safety defect as there are only some leafy branches which are hanging at the edge of the carriageway and there is still lots of carriageway width available with appropriate height clearance for the types of vehicles which would presumably be using the residential layby. If, however large vehicles are regularly using the layby and this is causing issues, the DCC HO would like to know and that aspect can be reassessed.

The HO assigned the report over to DCCs environmental landscape management team, as the issues of the light and TV signal being obstructed would fall within their remit. Unfortunately, due to a miscommunication within their team it does not appear anyone has responded. The HO has followed this up and, and requested that they assess and respond in relation to the reported light and TV signal obstructions. Apologies were given for the delays with this.

## VAS Funding

Earlier in the year, Councillors resolved to move forward with obtaining a new additional VAS subject to the financing of the project being confirmed by way of grants and any remaining shortfall being covered by the PC's unallocated reserves.

The Clerk, in liaison with the Parish Chairman, has been working on identifying relevant financial assistance by way of grant funding for the purchase of a new/replacement Vehicle Activated Sign. Councillors were asked to consider the following potential funding streams:

Devon County Council: Locality Budget Fund

West Devon Borough Council: Community Project Fund

West Devon Borough Council: Ward Members Locality Budget Fund

Devon Community Foundation Grant

Lifton Parish Council (unallocated reserves).

Councillors were also asked to confirm which VAS provider they wished to use following updated quotes being received from two companies.

**Motion: Councillors resolved to pursue funding from the above-mentioned funds/grant streams and agreed that a battery-operated VAS should be purchased from Elan City Ltd.**

**Proposed (SD); Seconded (TSW); All in favour. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

Clr Edmonds reported the existing VAS on Darkey Lane is not working. Councillors agreed to an electrician being called out to look at, and hopefully repair, the faulty VAS. All agreed.

The Parish Chairman undertook a survey of the street lights in the village; several faulty lights have been reported by the Clerk to DCC's Street Lighting Team. A follow up report will be made if these faulty lights are not fixed. Problems with street lights can be reported directly to DCC via: [Devon Street Lighting Services | Report a fault with an item \(lightsonindevon.co.uk\)](https://www.lightsonindevon.co.uk)

The 'trench' in the road by the new Oakdene housing development opposite West Devon Cottages was not deep enough to meet DCC Highways criteria for repair. The Parish Chairman was in contact with Wain Homes about this issue; the developer has the repair in hand, they are awaiting tarmacking on site and will combine this with the road repair at the same time.

Details about DCC's closure of Southern Bridge by Ambrosia for bridge repairs have been circulated to all Councillors along with the TTRO being published on the Parish website and posted up in the main village noticeboard.

### **Lifton Community Speed Watch Group**

CLlr Dunn provided the latest speed data report at the meeting. 4 speed watch sessions have taken place including 3 at Liftondown. The group have noticed a 3%-4% difference in speeding since the VAS was put in place. The group is undertaking 1 session a week and was still trying to recruit new volunteers. Sessions have had to be cancelled due to bad weather.

The CSW Co-ordinators meeting notes from 24<sup>th</sup> August had already been circulated to Councillors. The CSW groups were now able to undertake bi-directional speed checks; an application has gone in to have a bi-directional site at Liftondown. The Lifton volunteers have reported no ASB issues since wearing the body camera. There will be a Community Speed Watch Day on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024; all groups were being asked to go out and undertake checks on this date.

### **6.4 Burial Ground: Tree trimming by National Grid**

Councillors were informed that tree trimming would be conducted by National Grid contractors in the vicinity of the burial ground on North Road over the October half-term holiday, subject to the weather conditions. There are some sycamore saplings that have grown tall enough to be in contact with the overhead power lines and this may become a problem and affect the power supply to local homes if they are not trimmed back.

### **6.5 VE Day Commemoration: 10th - 11th May 2025**

The Fox & Grapes were making the Coronation Hall available to the community for any VE Day commemoration events over the 10<sup>th</sup>- 11<sup>th</sup> May weekend.

Councillors felt that there was little local appetite to run a large event on this occasion; both the local history group and the community centre were not planning on running any events.

CLlr K Dunn would look into whether it would be possible to hold the village coffee morning (held at the community centre) on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (VE Day).

### **6.6 Arundel Gardens: Bin request**

A request for a bin to be purchased and installed in Arundel Gardens play park had been made by a resident. Due to funding limitations, Lifton Parish Council were not able to purchase a new bin.

The Parish Chairman has contacted Live West housing association asking if they could purchase/install a bin in this location as it is one of their sites; there has been no response from Live West to-date.

CLlr Edmonds will pursue this matter with Live West.

### **6.7 Fore Street: Layby/village green parking**

Councillors were informed that complaints had been received concerning vehicles consistently parking with either one or two wheels on the grass in Fore Street on the area known locally as the village green. This grass will be churned up over the Autumn/Winter if this type of parking continues. Councillors were asked to consider purchasing some more small white bollards similar to those already in situ on another part of the village green in the hope that this would prevent parking and damage to the grass.

The Clerk reported that the previous supplier of the bollards no longer stocked that item; an alternative supplier with a similar product had been found. Councillors were informed that each bollard cost £20.33 plus VAT and delivery charge. For example, there would be a delivery charge of £35.00 for 10 bollards.

Councillors asked the Clerk to contact the DCC Highways Officer to find out if they knew of a cheaper alternative; if they had a surplus stock of bollards; or for details of a different supplier. An update will be provided at the November PC meeting.

### **6.8 Defibrillator Update**

Cllr K Dunn and Mr Grenney undertook the defib checks during August and September; the defib continued to be in good working order. Cllr K Dunn agreed to continue to undertake the defib checks in October; Cllr Gynn would take over the checks in November.

Councillors were informed that there is now a defibrillator down in Tinhay at Matt Luxton's Gym building; this was achieved through local fundraising.

## **7. Reports:**

### **7.1 OPCC Councillor Advocate Scheme**

Cllr Gynn provided the report below which was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting:  
Report on Councillor Advocate Seminar, 3 of 4 held at Exeter Racecourse, 11th September 2024  
Speakers included: D&C Police and Crime Commissioner: Alison Hernandez; Acting Chief Constable: Jim Colwell; and Assistant Chief Constable: Nikki Leaper.

The Councillor Advocate scheme is used as an information conduit between town/parish councillors and the police. There are usually 4 Councillor Advocate meetings per year. Two on-line, and two for attendance in person.

Alison Hernandez summarised the progress gains by the police service in the current year, including an award of £1million for anti-social behaviour (ASB) and challenges such as the recent civil unrest in Plymouth.

- The commissioner referred to the events on 5th August 2024 (see report, below from Jim Colwell).
- The prisoner early release scheme. 23 early releases in D&C area, 10 in Devon, 4 in Plymouth.

Jim Colwell outlined some ASB facts, and also the use of the recent prisoner early release scheme, particularly after the August street violence, where 3 officers received minor injuries.

Nikki Leaper explained how the public are able to contact the police, also the facts on 999, 101, and police.uk web-site.

- 999 - Average wait time improved from 13 secs to 5 secs.
- 101 - 99% of calls answered in > 10mins. Call-back, average time 21 minutes.
- Police.uk is the 'one stop shop' for police information and reporting issues.

## 8. Finance

### 8.1 For payment:

Clerk's salary for September	£ 700.70
Clerk's expenses (x2 reams A4 Paper; x10 Durable storage boxes & printer ink)	£ 58.88
Cllr Glynn's expenses (mileage claim for OPCC event attendance)	£ 39.60
SLCC: Membership renewal fee 2024-25	£ 148.00

**Proposed (TSW) and seconded (SD); all in favour that the above payments be made online.**

[Above payments: £947.18]

**Action: Clerk to make all payments online.**

Councillors formally noted the following invoices that had been paid under the Scheme of Delegation or that needed paying since the last PC meeting:

M&M Kneebone Building Services Ltd: Repair to lychgate at burial ground (inc. £8.33 VAT)	£ 50.00
Vision ICT: x1 Annual email hosted (inc. £4.00 VAT)	£ 24.00
Clerk's expenses - August: New laptop for Parish Clerk (inc. £43.17 VAT)	£ 259.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP: External Audit fee 2024-25 (inc. £42.00 VAT)	£ 252.00

[Above payments: £585.00]

### 8.2 Receipts:

Interest £ 8.60

### 8.3 Outstanding invoices: None

The September and all above listed invoices for payment along with the bank statements dated 30 August 2024 were seen and signed by two Councillors.

## General matters relating to Finance:

### 8.4 External Auditor Report & Certificate 2023/24 (Section 3 of AGAR) and Notice of conclusion of audit

The Clerk reported that the external audit for 2023/24 was complete and that Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24 had been received and published on the Parish Council website along with the Notice of conclusion of audit (which was also posted up on the main village noticeboard).

Councillors formally noted the External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2023/24: 'On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority: None.'

### 8.5 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2024-25

Councillors were asked to consider appointing P. Clapham BA (Hons) PSLCC for the 2024-25 Lifton Parish Council internal audit; this was the same person who had conducted the PC's 2023-24 internal audit.

**Motion: Councillors resolved to appoint P. Clapham BA (Hons) PSLCC for the 2024-25 internal audit. The Clerk was asked to proceed with confirming the above appointment.**

**Proposed (MA); Seconded (CG); All agreed. A vote was taken by a show of hands.**

## 9. Planning

### 9.1 Applications:

4134/23/FUL - Proposal: Erection of a new dwelling. Site Address: Darkey Cottage, Willas Road, Lifton, PL16 0DZ

Councillors were informed that this planning application had been returned by the Planning Authority to the applicant.

**9.2 Approvals:** None

**9.3 Refusals:** None

### General matters relating to Planning:

9.4 None

### 10. Correspondence:

West Devon Borough Council: Consultation on Draft Gambling Statement of Principles

West Devon Borough Council: Polling Districts and Polling Places Review

**11. Councillors' items for future agenda:** Parish Footpaths and Lifton Village Trail leaflet; Mobile phone mast on church; QEII Committee: Terms of Reference; and Parking on Fore Street (village green area).

Meeting closed at 20:15.

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

**Next Meeting:** 7.00pm, Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 (Venue tbc)