

Branston & Mere Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Pavilion, Moor Lane, Branston on
Monday 6th January 2020 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs. Blair, Clarke, Cucksey, Lundgren, Marchant, Naulls, Newman, Penistan, Ross, Tebb and Willcox.

In Attendance: Clerks - Mrs Stead and Mrs Naylor.

Members of the Public: One.

Item 1 a) Apologies for absence and reasons given.

The Council noted and approved the reasons for the apologies of Cllr Adams.

b) Declarations of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests.

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2 Public Forum.

No issues were raised.

Item 3 Reports from representatives on outside bodies:

a) Police.

The online Police Newsletter reported:

- A series of thefts from vans between 28th – 29th December.
- ASB reports in the Moor Lane car park.
Officers were carrying out targeted patrols to deal with possible offences.
- Winter crime prevention advice.

b) County Council.

- Ms Debbie Barnes had been appointed as Chief Executive. She had served as interim CEO during 2019 and had been Director of Children's Services since 2012.
- The adverse weather had resulted in over 120 flooding issues and caused damage to some roads. The road at Short Ferry would be assessed for damage when the water receded.
- There would be a long-term closure on the B1190 for construction of the final roundabout for the Eastern Bypass. Cllr Oxby said that the diversion route was via Branston, but he intended requesting temporary lights on Canwick Hill to allow the C113 to be an alternative route. Although not ideal, there had been traffic lights on the hill during recent work at the IBCC.
- Work to improve traffic flow at the Riseholme roundabout on the A46 was expected to take seven months.
- An £8m investment in Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue, including 33 new Scania fire appliances and state-of-the-art, 'Coldcut Cobra' units to enable fires to be tackled from the outside of buildings, would make Lincolnshire the best equipped and protected in the country.

c) District Council.

Cllr Cucksey reported:

- The Local Government Financial Settlement for 2020/21 had been announced in December giving local authorities an increase of 4.4% in real terms, in their Core Spending Power.
- The Rural Delivery Grant would continue, recognising the extra cost of delivering services in rural areas and proposed to maintain the 2019 grant of £81 million.
- Local authorities would be allowed to increase Council Tax by up to 2% without holding a local referendum.
- The Executive Board would review Fees & Charges relating to the services during January. Some charges were set under statute and determined through government legislation but the Council could set charges for discretionary services and, wherever possible, the charge recovered the full cost.

- Cllr Lundgren reported that a motion had been passed to promote and facilitate local power production, in line with the Local Electricity Bill.
- A motion on religious hatred and anti-Semitism had been passed., to address an upsurge in religious hatred.
- The Communities and Economy Scrutiny Panel would be scrutinising the development between Branston and Lincoln on the 15 January; focusing on the provision of infrastructure and services for new and existing communities.

d) Community Library.

The details of the IT upgrade had been confirmed and considered by the Volunteer Coordinator to be manageable.

e) Environment Warden Report.

The Warden had reported that he had asked a resident to remove his dogs from the Moor Lane Recreation Ground. He suggested that the Parish Council consider an Open Space Control Order.

Item 4 a) To resolve that the notes of the meeting held on 2nd December are approved as the Minutes.

Acceptance of the notes was proposed by Cllr Newman and seconded by Cllr Ross.

b) Matters arising from the Minutes for clarification.

16274 Ref: Police Report - PCSO Flannigan had advised that the new reporting format would give greater access to information. He confirmed that the ASB category included incidents that didn't fit other categories and advised that there had not been an increase in youth crime.

Item 5 Correspondence:

a) Newsletters and Periodic Publications.

16275 LALC News.	171
16276 Clerks & Councils Direct	January.

b) NKDC – Fund NK Outcome.

16277 The application to NKDC for £2,500 towards the gateways had been refused. The 'potentially excellent benefits for residents' had been noted but it had been decided that the Parish Council had sufficient funds to cover the cost.

Item 6

16278 Planning Applications & Tree Applications:

a) Planning decisions received.

Planning permission had been granted on the following applications:

19/0729 Channel improvements	Sandhill Beck.
19/0961 Reserved matters on 2 dwelling	Rear of 64 & 66 Sleaford Road.
19/1083 Relocation of Air Ambulance HQ	East of RAF Waddington.
19/1399 Single storey extension	The Barn, Springfield Yard.
19/1453 Single storey rear extension	6 Deansway.
19/1468 Variation of conditions	Branston Solar Park.
19/1583 Rear extensions	53 Station Road.

b) Planning Applications viewed during the month.

19/1677 Steel framed grain store	Westfield Farm, Hall Lane.
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No objections.

19/1633 Nine dwellings and access	Windmill Meadow.
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Branston & Mere Parish Council objects to the proposal.

- *The 0.4 hectares of land for this proposal, described a vacant grass/scrubland, was originally offered as a site for a new GP surgery, following widespread concerns about the Branston Surgery being oversubscribed and difficulty obtaining appointments. Regrettably the site was considered too small for the purpose. The area of community land formed part of the approval and it was understood that it would be given to the community. A previous Parish Council response to 13/1388 included a comment that there had been no consultation on how the community site would be used; who would be responsible for its management or how it would be developed for the community.*

Policy LP 12 requires infrastructure to support growth, sufficient to meet all necessary requirements arising from the development.

- *The final clause on the future of the community land was worded differently and allowed the site to be marketed.*

The Parish Council sought professional advice on a suitable offer for 0.4h with D1 approval. The advice suggested that as agricultural land it would be £10k; as D1 it was £50k and full residential value was £500k. As land for community benefit, it was considered that the developer would not be looking to make a profit and the advice suggested £15-20k. The Parish Council subsequently submitted an offer of £20,000 to secure the land as a community benefit.

Four months later, in October 2017, the offer was refused: 'not prepared to accept this offer' and 'seeking offers in the region of £500,000 for the site'.

As the Parish Council could not increase the offer to anywhere near that level, no further offer was possible.

- *The offer was not withdrawn. The Parish Council was extremely disappointed that the price could be set unreasonably high and out of the reach of the community and questions whether the condition was transparent, open and honest.*
- *The pocket of community land was part of the approval; offering a facility for the village and used in the marketing of the 198 new homes. That opportunity will be denied if this application is approved. Within the Planning Officer's report at approval, the community land was included in the calculation of community space. How will that shortfall be compensated?*
- *In the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, currently at draft consultation stage, Policy 14 seeks to protect this land for the community. In addition, Policy 2 requires developers to secure approval via consultation on additional development to sites not identified in the Greater Lincoln Local Plan.*
- *Windmill Meadow is by far the largest of the three developments planned for Branston. While contributions to health and education are calculated to a formula, they are not ring-fenced. The s106 contribution for community facilities was originally £230k; reduced to £180k before being completely lost through a loophole and minor variation. Something that was not apparent to the Parish Council and the community when the variation was considered. The Parish Council is appalled that Taylor Wimpey will not make any provision to improve community facilities to accommodate the residents of 198 – 207 new homes.*
- *The Parish Council considers that the 380 new homes at the allocated sites should be built out before 'windfall sites' above the allocation in the Local Plan come forward for consideration.*

Adequate facilities are required to maintain flourishing, sustainable communities.

19/1339 Appeal – Outline for Dwelling to land at rear 93 Lincoln Road.
No further comments to add.

c) Tree Application Decisions received – all approved.

19/1523 Crown reduction of 7 trees	The Barn, Springfield Yard.
19/1561 Fell 1 Bramley	27 Hall Lane
19/1564 Trim group of trees to 6m	89 Lincoln Road.
Crown reduction of 3m to a maximum height of 5m allowed.	
19/1585 Reduce 2 Lilac by 50%	Chestnut House, Thackers Lane.
19/1593 Fell conifer & reduce & reshape Holly	1 Church Road.

d) Tree applications received.

19/1741 Various tree work	26a Rectory Lane.
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No objections.

19/1786 Removal of 125m of hedgerow	Off Mere Road.
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Branston & Mere Parish Council would welcome guidance from the Tree Officer on the species in and the condition of this significant length of mature hedgerow.

Item 7 Other Reports:**a) Neighbourhood Plan consultation.**

16279 Cllr Lundgren said that leaflets promoting the Neighbourhood Plan and drop-in event had been delivered to every household. Several positive comments about the Plan had been received with no objections to date.

b) Update on installation of speed reduction measures.

16280 The Chairman reported that the two speed signs had been installed on Lincoln Road. He hoped that voltage issues with the device opposite Woodview would be quickly resolved.

16281 Quotes were still being sought to install gateways on the B1188 and B1190. Unfortunately, temporary traffic lights were needed and there was little interest in the job.

c) BBF 2020 requirements for consideration.

16282 Cllr Marchant reported that the event planning was progressing well.

The new gate had been installed, making access to the field easier.

d) Emergency Plan equipment storage & need for power to ISO. Cllr Marchant.

16283 Heavy duty racking for the ISO had been donated by Lincolnshire Co-op and quotes had been requested to install electrical sockets, strip lights, a fuse box & associated cabling.

16284 A meeting had been scheduled to discuss Operation Silver Siren, a scenario planned to test the readiness of the Plan and Emergency Team.

e) Reduction in LCC verge cutting & possible contribution to take over.

16285 Verges owned by LCC would be cut three times in 2020, including those previously cut on their behalf by NKDC. NKDC would continue to cut their areas on a fortnightly basis.

LCC had offered the Parish Council the opportunity to take over all LCC verges for a contribution towards the cost of £2305.79 for the season: 32,294m² in total. The offer would be declined.

Cllr Cucksey said that residents needed to be aware that it was an LCC responsibility that NKDC had previously subsidised. Cllr Ross said that residents should not be encouraged or feel obliged to maintain verges near their homes.

f) Update on removal of conifer hedge at Moor Lane

16286 The Assistant Clerk had submitted further information and photographs to the Forestry Commission. A site meeting with the Forestry Commission had been requested. Any work approved could be further delayed by the nesting season. The affected resident would be kept informed.

g) To confirm new agreement with LK2.

16287 The staged payment schedule for architectural services for the revised proposal had been circulated. The Clerk would seek confirmation that the previous payments made would be credited to the new agreement prior to signing the contract at the February meeting.

h) Work to Skate Park & installation of the Junior Gym.

16288 The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the work by Lovell Homes to build up the mounds had been completed before Christmas. The Skate Park would remain closed and fenced off until the February half-term, to allow the ground to settle. The mounds would need to be seeded and rolled when the weather allowed.

16289 The junior gym equipment had been installed before Christmas and had already received favourable comments.

i) Possible new bus shelter on Station Rd.

16290 The Chairman had spoken to the neighbouring resident about the position of a bus shelter. He had no objection to a shelter at the bus stop but did not want it positioned against his hedge. Further advice on creating a level platform for the shelter would be sought from LCC.

Item 8 Governance Review –**a) Risk Assessment.**

16291 The reducing risk at the skate park would be monitored and adjusted accordingly.

Item 9 Finance:**a) To approve payments to be made.**

16292 Approval of the payments was proposed by Cllr Clarke and seconded by Cllr Ross.

T Mobile	Mobile Tariff	11.29
Staff payments	Wages & Expenses	4365.82
HMRC	Tax & NI	733.53
NEST	Pension	365.32
Michael Cummins	Environment Warden	262.50
Chinchero	Internal Audit	275.00
Paul Strong	Boiler service	90.00
Buildbase	Post mix (gate)	31.91
HAGS	Seesaw part	477.79
Fresh Air Fitness	Junior Gym (final)	5452.50
Branston Community Academy	Sports Hall Hire (Escape)	288.00
Rick Wilkinson	Expenses - materials	48.89
	Total Payments.	12402.55

b) 3rd Quarter report.

16293 The report had been circulated. No issues were raised.

c) To discuss and approve the Precept Demand, including Grant Aid requests.

16294 Cllrs Clarke, Naulls & Ross had produced a draft budget that had been circulated for consideration. Issues considered included amounts that could be reallocated by resolution and the retirement of the Clerk. Cllr Newman objected to the request for a grant from the U3a Croquet group and suggested that they should apply to other funders and their central organisation.

The clerk advised that the annual and weekly subs paid by members had been increased in 2019 after feedback on their 2019 application. The group continued to pay a fee to use the Recreation Ground and paid for the additional grass cutting through the season.

The request for £300 towards the spring and autumn lawn treatment was approved for 2020 but evidence of applications to other bodies would be required in future.

16295 Cllr Tebb proposed that the 3.99% increase be levied: 7 in favour; 3 against; 1 abstention.

A demand of £136,800 would be submitted.

According to the Precept calculator, that would see an increase of £11,830 and a levy of £92.47 on a Band D property (+£3.54 for the year).

Item 10 Pending – Movement on Unresolved Issues not covered:**h) Branston Booths dyke & fence.**

16296 Work at Branston Booths' play area was scheduled to start on 17th January.

There was no movement on any other issues.

Item 11 Items for information.

16297 Cllr Tebb suggested that the Council should consider producing a 5-year plan to look at future projects. Reviewed annually, it would provide evidence when setting the Precept.

16298 Cllr Newman agreed to submit an online report about a very large pothole on Beech Road.

Item 12 To resolve on whether the Council will move into closed session.

No members of the public were present, and Cllr Oxby left the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.