

Branston & Mere Parish Council
Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held by Teams on
Monday 5th October 2020 at 7pm.

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

In Attendance: Clerks - Mrs Stead and Mrs Naylor.
County Cllr Oxby.

Members of the Public: One.

Item 1 a) Acceptance of apologies for absence and reasons given.

It was noted that Cllr Catton had been unable to log on.

b) Declarations of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests.

Cllr Adams declared a personal interest in the revised planning application for 5 Veronica Close and made no comment.

Item 2 Public Forum.

No issues had been raised.

Item 3 Reports from representatives on outside bodies:

a) Police.

The report would be circulated on receipt.

b) County Council.

Cllr Oxby reported that:

- Brayford Wharf East would be closed for a year as part of an experiment to encourage cycling. £105k had been awarded for experimental schemes, including a campaign to encourage tourism and support businesses.
- The Flu vaccination programme had been limited to GP surgeries due to a shortage of the vaccine.
- The system used to pay care home fees above the set allowance had changed; with the onus moving from the care home to LCC to claim the additional cost from the family.
- Four Lincolnshire schools had confirmed Covid-19 cases.
- A project had started to fund foster homes for migrant children.
- The speed limit between Holdingham and Leasingham had been reduced to 50mph after a spate of accidents.
- Bypass work on the B1188 had been completed ahead of schedule.

Cllr Ross asked whether there was an update on the southern bypass. Cllr Oxby advised that there was no funding or timescale in place.

c) District Council.

- Cllr Lundgren advised that committees would soon be able to incorporate all members virtually, after numbers had been reduced due to IT limitations. The Annual Council Meeting would be held during October.
- An Environment Priority would be re-adopted
- NKDC had been the first local authority in Lincolnshire to declare a climate emergency and had put together a strategy and action plan towards a carbon neutral target, which formed a major part in all decision making.
- The Local Plan review was ongoing. Cllr Lundgren said that he continued to represent the concerns of Branston residents about planning and the government's 'build, build, build' programme. He said that there were between 800k and 1 million homes in the UK that had been approved but not yet built; with developers 'land banking' huge tracts of land. In NK there was a 5-year land supply.

- The government was keen to push for Devolution and a Unitary Authority for Lincolnshire. Cllr Lundgren questioned the predicted savings in delivering services and whether a unitary authority would be able to deliver services as efficiently as a District Council. He suggested that local representation was not high priority to many people but said that a unitary authority would leave communities with one elected representative with one voice, in a very large authority.
- Cllr Cucksey reported that the 2019/20 Annual Report had been approved by the Executive Board. The report was available on the website.
- The possibility of switching the leisure facilities sites to a certified 100% renewable electricity tariff and a solution to tackle emissions from gas consumption for heating, was being considered.
- The 2018 North Kesteven Cycling Strategy had been refreshed in line with national and local policy and new opportunities to promote cycling. The draft 2020 NK Cycling Strategy had been approved by the Executive Board.
- NKDC had committed to producing a Tree Strategy, to explore how trees and green infrastructure could contribute to efforts to tackle climate change and fulfil the 'Our Environment' corporate priority.
- To compensate for the loss of Business Rate Income, the government had awarded £3,071,888 in additional section 31 grants. The projected 2020/21 deficit for the General Fund was £1,624,200.

d) Community Library.

The Library Coordinator had reported that the first phase of the reopening had gone well but had not progressed to phase 2 due to a positive case of Covid-19, involving a year 9 pupil and subsequent fourteen-day isolation period. Providing that there were no further cases, phase 2 would allow members of the public into the Library to browse. The Chairman commended the Community Academy on the way they had dealt with the positive Covid test.

A small group of pupils from the Infant School had visited the Library and the new headteacher, Mrs Cook, hoped that it could become a regular occurrence.

16525 Cllr Clarke repeated his concerns that the Library Risk Assessment should be owned and signed off by the Parish Council. The Chairman would review the Risk Assessment to ensure that risks to the public and volunteers were covered. Cllr Ross said that it should be a joint agreement with the school and LCC.

e) Environment Warden Report.

No report had been received.

Item 4 a) To resolve that the notes of the meeting held on 7th September are approved as the Minutes.

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

b) Matters arising from the Minutes for clarification.

16526 Ref 16494 - A letter had been e-mailed to Lincs Groundworks requiring them to move the wrongly sited gateway on Lincoln Road by 1st October. No response had been received.

The Clerk was instructed to post a formal letter prior to referring the matter to Highways.

16527 Ref 16519 - A letter had been sent to the resident at the Green Tree in Branston Booths to enquire about their intentions for the prominently parked van. There had been no response and the van remained.

16528 Ref 16521 – Cllr Ross said that the props had been removed from the stone cottage on Lincoln Road without any repairs being made. Cllr Marchant advised that star-bindings had been inserted into the stonework.

Item 5 Correspondence:

a) Newsletters and Periodic Publications.

No publications had been received.

b) Letters for information.

16529 Anglian Water had provided an update on the installation of the new pipeline - noted.

c) NKDC – Consultation on Hackney Carriage & Private Hire.

16530 Details of the consultation had been circulated. There were no comments.

d) Resident Letter.

16531 A resident had requested an additional Dog Waste bin between Earlsfield and The Chalfonts. The Clerk was asked to consult the Environment Warden on the problem and Cllr Penistan would view the area.

e) Resident letter.

16532 A resident had expressed an interest in organising a litter-pick. There was some concern about liability if endorsed by the Parish Council during the Covid-19 crisis and further enquiries would be made.

Item 6**16533 Planning Applications & Tree Applications:****a) Planning decisions received.**

Planning permission had been granted on the following applications:

20/0810 Demolition of dwelling & erection of a detached bungalow Hillsboro, Moors.

20/0940 Variation of conditions 69 Station Road

The following application had been withdrawn.

20/0932 Removal of condition to allow 3rd party use Longhills Farm.

b) Planning Applications received viewed during the month.

20/0523 Two storey extension & retention of cladding & render 5 Veronica Close.

As previously submitted, the Parish Council continues to object to the application to fill in the angular shape of this house and in addition considers that the powder blue cladding and render already applied compromises the street scene and is inappropriate to the setting, being more suited to a harbour or beach front.

20/1164 2 semi-detached dwellings with access 1a Bardney Road.

No objections.

20/1171 2 illuminated & 2 non-illuminated logo signs Air Ambulance Station.

No objections

20/1183 Potato transfer flume Branston Ltd, Mere Road

No objections

20/1208 Rear extension 4 willow Road

No objections

20/1241 First floor extension 20 Fairleas

No objections

c) Tree Application Decisions received.

Permission had been granted on the following applications:

20/0502 Fell Beech Church Hall Allotments

20/0683 Crown lift 4 trees 40 Silver Street.

20/0862 Fell Laburnum 41 Silver Street.

20/1041 Crown lift 5 trees Old Farmhouse, Church Road.

20/1042 Crown lift 2 Yews Old Farmhouse, Church Road.

20/1059 Removal of 245m of hedgerow Adjacent to Bloxholm Lane

20/1060 fell Silver Birch The Bothy, Waterwheel Lane

d) Tree applications received.

20/1268 Fell 2 Cypresses High Meadow, Thackers Lane.

No objections

20/1260 Trim side shoots on Maple & 2 Birch trees Hafren, 1 Melville Close.

No objections

20/1337 Crown reduction of Bramley apple tree Stonegarth, Church Road.

No objections

Item 7 Other Reports:**a) Update on office, signage and occupation.**

16534 The Clerk advised that the refurbishment had been completed and the finish was very good. Arrangements had been made for a thorough clean prior to moving in at the end of the month.

A vacuum, steam mop, door mat, coat hooks & washroom fittings would be required. A list would be circulated for approval. At a later date, a conference table and chairs would be required.

b) Covid-19 Support Group update.

16535 Cllr Marchant said that at week 28 there had been over 1120 requests for help; including 15 on the previous Friday; showing that the need for community support was still there. The number of available volunteers had started to increase again, with offers to cover evenings and weekends.

Fare Share had made their last, generous donation and a letter of thanks had been sent. Further support could be given but the cost of transport would be charged. Donations had been made by the churches Potterhanworth and Bracebridge Heath.

More families needing help had been identified and the Food Bank would be available until the end of the year.

16536 The NKDC Community Champion award winners would be announced on 7th October and Cllr Marchant was a finalist in the Community Safety category.

A nomination for a County award would be judged in November.

c) Results of the Good Neighbour Scheme survey.

16537 Cllr Marchant reported that there had been 149 returns from the 1500 leaflets delivered. The responses had identified 50 residents needing more support than provided by NKDC & LCC: including transport to hospital appointments and shopping. There had been interest in a central point for community information and 17 new volunteers had come forward to be part of the initiative.

Work would continue to form the committee, draw up a constitution, open a bank account and start the training; with a view to an official launch in March 2021.

d) Update on the progress of the Pavilion project.

16538 Notes, including an action plan, had been produced at the Extra-ordinary meeting. The Chairman said that additional research would be carried out ahead of another Extra-Ordinary meeting.

Cllr Tebb added that LK2 had agreed that to continue if the design was reduced. Contracts for the consultation process and architect had been signed and staged payments already made. To cancel the contracts would cost approx. £2,000.

e) To consider ways to address the ASB issues at Moor Lane.

16539 The level of ASB at the Moor Lane car park, often lasting into the night, had increased and was affecting the quality of life for neighbouring residents. The Parish Council and lack of police response had been criticised on social media. The Clerk had reported the issues to the local police sergeant and had written to the Police Inspector and Marc Jones (PCC) and additional measures had been put in place.

The Chairman had created signage for the car park to support the police and had responded to the criticism on Facebook, providing his email address for affected residents to message him directly with details of behaviour and crime reference numbers from their reports to the police.

16540 Cllr Tebb had made initial enquiries about barriers and bollards to restrict entry and would circulate details and costs for further discussion. There was no budget for the project during the current financial year and it could be necessary for a resolution to reallocate funds or consider taking a loan. The potential lead time on installation was 3 months.

There was concern that barriers at Moor Lane could move the problem to the Village Hall car park and it was agreed that measures would need to be considered at both sites.

f) Community Speed Watch Initiative.

16541 The project was on hold due to a sudden death at the LRSP.

g) To consider improvements to the PCs social media presence.

16542 The Chairman said that a greater presence was needed to allow the Parish Council to become more proactive and better able to defend and explain actions and reach more people.

Cllr Ross urged caution on who provided a response, suggesting that it be limited to the Clerk and Chairman. Cllr Willcox noted that the inappropriate post had been quickly removed after the Chairman's explanation.

h) Future plans for the Jungle field & possible community orchard.

16543 Cllr Lundgren suggested that consideration be given to planting Lincolnshire Heritage fruit trees, to help preserve old varieties. Cllr Tebb commented that some heritage fruits were not good to eat and the reason why they were disappearing. The idea would be moved to Pending for further consideration.

i) Tree work required and quotes received.

16544 The Assistant Clerk reported that emergency tree work had been carried out in the Jungle and the Lincoln Road play area after the recent extreme wind.

16545 A fallen branch in the Jungle had caused serious damage to the boardwalk. It had been cleared and the section taped off. The cost of repair was estimated at approx. £400.

Cllr Ross proposed and Cllr Clarke seconded Hill Holt Wood to carry out a repair asap.

It was suggested that a 3 to 5-year plan was needed to manage the Jungle.

16546 The felling of the conifers at Moor Lane had been delayed by the wind.

j) To consider the purchase of U11 goalposts.

16547 The Clerk had circulated the details of HBW membership and the cost of the goalposts. The Chairman said that the Parish Council had always provided goal posts.

The Football Foundation had given a grant to cover 75% of the cost.

Cllr Ross proposed and Cllr Willcox seconded covering the remaining £153.90 from ear-marked reserves for the purpose.

Item 8 Governance Review –

a) Risk Assessment.

16548 Cllrs Clarke & Naulls would review the Library Risk Assessment.

16549 A Risk Assessment would be drawn up for the new office.

16550 The Clerk would carry out a full review of the Council's Risk Assessment and liaise with Cllr Clarke.

b) To review arrangements according to the latest Covid-19 guidelines.

16551 The Pavilion had sanitiser and a range of advisory notices, covering distancing, face coverings, hygiene and the new QR code for Track & Trace, to comply with guidelines. A risk assessment had been carried out and Special Conditions were in place for hirers to follow.

The onus was on the organisers to keep a register of attendees to supplement the QR code due to issues being reported. A reminder would be circulated.

Item 9 Finance:

a) To approve payments to be made.

16552 Approval of the payments was proposed by Cllr Ross and seconded by Cllr Clarke.

T Mobile	Mobile Tariff	8.00
Staff payments	Wages & Expenses	4435.50
HMRC	Tax & NI	612.06
NEST	Pension	324.68
M Cummins	Environmental Warden	210.00
C B Ground Maintenance	Grass cutting	540.10
ESPO	Misc	9.14
Technical Surfaces	Astro Maintenance	426.07
Firestop	Extinguisher service - Pavilion	138.34
Firestop	Extinguisher service - Office	204.44
British Gas	Environmental lights - Aug & Sept	2.45
British Gas	Office - Sept Est.	327.36
Hill Holt Wood	Jungle maintenance	168.00
	Total Payments.	7406.14

b) Half-year report.

16553 The report had been circulated.

The Personnel spends would, as a whole, be covered at the year-end, including a certain overspend of about £900 for the Environmental Warden, due to a miscalculation at the end of 2019/20 and additional patrols and cleaning during lockdown. No other concerns were raised.

Item 10 Pending - Unresolved Issues not covered:

a) Cycle path provision – Lincoln Road & Mere Road.

b) Co-op car park issues.

- c) **GP provision in the parish.**
- d) **Provision of a Post Office**
- e) **Future of the Youth Club.**
- f) **Memorial Garden benches.**
- g) **To finalise the Library Agreement.**
- a) **Provision of a Hire Bike station.**
- b) **Parish Council surgeries.**
- c) **New website.**
- d) **Business plan.**

There was nothing to add on any of the unresolved issues.

Item 11 Items for information.

16554 Cllr Lundgren reassured members that the memorial at Windmill Meadow was in the process of being delivered with the approved variations. He had seen a video of the memorial stone being excavated.

16555 The Bank Mandate needed to be updated before the application for a credit card could be completed.

16556 A resident from Branston Booths had offered a Christmas tree. Cllr Lundgren would check that it was suitable.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.