

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER  
AT 1930 as a Virtual Meeting via Zoom.

**Present:**

Councillor M Oldfield (Chairman)  
Councillor C Mitchell  
Councillor E Christie  
Councillor R Fagence  
Councillor C Lawrence  
Councillor M Brookbank

1 Parishioners

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from County and District Councillor Kiddle-Morris, due to other commitments.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

Councillor Lawrence completed a Declaration of Pecuniary interest form related to Item number 7.1 and 7.2.

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

Councillor Mitchell proposed and Councillor Lawrence seconded the resolution that the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 having been circulated be approved. The minutes were duly signed.

**4. Public Participation-**

A parishioner from the Litcham Common Conservation Group wrote a letter to the Parish Council updating them on the activities of the conservation group volunteers who are keeping footpaths clear, picking up litter and clearing scrubs. The volunteers check on the ponies on a daily basis and three times a year they are checked by a vet and a farrier. The Conservation group have approached the Parish Council requesting a contribution of a grant to help towards renewals of tools and membership costs.

**4.1 To receive report from the County and District Councillor**

Covid 19

The Covid 19 infection rates are rising among the working population in Norfolk and there are concerns that this could lead to an increase in the infection rate among the over 60's which will impose a strain on hospital accommodation. As of the 23<sup>rd</sup> October the infection rate has risen to 89.2 per 1000k of population, the Breckland area has the highest rate at 171 per 100k. The Breckland rate of infection is mainly due to the outbreak of the food processing plant in Watton where nearly half of workers tested have proved positive. To prevent the transmission of the virus to the vulnerable members of the population it is important to follow the strict guidelines: Hands-Face-Space and the rule of 6. Norfolk remains in Tier One restrictions.

In advance of any serious second wave please remember to contact those people who needed support during the last lockdown to reassure them of support in the future if required.

#### Flu:

Flu causes the death of around 15,000 people in the UK each year. The most vulnerable group are those people over 65, the same group that are at most risk from Covid 19. There has been an increase in the take up of the flu vaccine this year, but the message must be to all those who are at most risk i.e. those with underlying respiratory conditions plus those over 65 to get a flu jab.

#### Budget:

There is still considerable uncertainty around what government funding will be available for the financial year 21/22. Additionally, the government has not stated whether the allowed percentage increase in the general precept will remain at 2% or be amended. There is also uncertainty as to whether a rise is permissible in the adult social care precept. Despite this uncertainty NCC are obliged to consult on its budget proposals for 21/22 making suppositions as to governments intentions. The consultation runs until the 14<sup>th</sup> December, details can be found on the NCC website. The Council will set its council tax at its February 2021 meeting.

#### Grass Cutting:

As part of the budget consultation (above) it is proposed to reduce grass verge cutting on “C” and “U” roads from 2 cuts per year to one. Also, it is proposed to reduce urban cuts from 5 to 4 per year.

#### Boundary Review:

The second Boundary commission consultation on proposed changes to the Councils Division boundaries closes on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November. A change from the initial consultation is that Brisley is added to the new Division “Launditch”. Due to a delay in the process due to Covid any changes will not take place until the 2025 Norfolk Council elections.

#### Parish Partnership:

A reminder that bids for 50% funding for small highway improvements under the Parish Partnership scheme need to be submitted by the middle of December. If you have any queries, please contact me in the first instance.

#### County Farms:

The County Council is committed to maintaining the County Farm Estate in excess of 16,000 acres. The tenanted farms which vary in size provide a thriving and progressive estate which supports individual businesses and enables economic growth into the county’s agricultural sector and indirectly into numerous related businesses. Any capital receipt from the sale of redundant buildings and land are reinvested in the estate. The County Farm estate was recently increased through the purchase of 163 acres.

The Councillors would like to feedback to the District and County Councillor regarding the reduced verge cutting from 2 cuts per year to 1, for Health and Safety reasons this is not acceptable especially on the “C” roads.

**4.2 Public Comment**-No comments received

## **5. Highways**

### **5.1 To note any new problems within the parish.**

The trees on the top of back lane need cutting and the clerk will write to the homeowner.

Councillor Fagence reported potholes in Pound Lane and a pothole in church Street near to the old village sign. The clerk will report both of these.

### **5.2 Update on Highways problems reported**

The clerk had contacted the Tree Preservation Officer and received a reply which was forwarded to all the Councillors for information.

The Litcham sign on the Lexham road has been fitted to new posts.

The pothole on Back lane has been filled recently.

The pothole on the Mileham road/Tittleshall road junction needs reporting again. The clerk will action this.

Anglian Water returned and fixed the Drain cover

The hedge on Mileham road has been trimmed back by the homeowner. The homeowner is looking at putting in some fence posts as if the full hedge was cut back, her garden would be exposed.

The clerk wrote a letter regarding the trees on back lane, but the property has since been sold.

The road surface on Druids Lane has been replaced but it is not very good, and the white lines have not been re-instated. The clerk to report this to the District Councillor Kiddle-Morris.

The clerk has submitted the Councillors comments on Planning for the future forum.

## **6. Planning**

### **Applications-No Application**

## **7 Matters for Report**

**7.1 Seat/Bench for Manor Drive-** Councillor Lawrence left the meeting due to declaration of interest. The clerk received a quote from Mr. Lawrence but the Councillors would like a further quote before making the decision. The clerk will contact the company who is supplying the bench to see if we can have a copy of the fitting instructions as this may help with obtaining quotes.

### **7.2 Long Meadow**

Councillor Lawrence left the meeting due to declaration of interest. The fence on Long Meadow has been erected and the Councillors are really pleased with it.

Councillor Lawrence rejoined the meeting.

### **7.3 Parish Partnership Scheme**

The Clerk reported that the Parish partnerships scheme forms will need to be completed by December to apply for 50% funding towards a purchase. Councillor Oldfield reported about installing village gates on two of the approaches into Litcham. One set of gates on the B1145 on the Mileham road and another set of gates on the B1145 approach on the Lexham road. The Clerk will find out further information and will contact the Highways Engineer to start the process of obtaining quotes.

## **7.4 Website**

The New Litcham Website is now live, and the clerk reported that the website is still being updated. The old Parish website will still be active and used mainly to update parishioners on current village events. The new website will be mainly for Parish Council documents, Agendas and the minutes. A link from the previous website will go directly to the new parish council website.

## **7.5 Policies**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council policies need renewing and updating. The clerk will update all the policies and will add it to the Agenda for the next meeting for them to be signed.

## **8 To Consider requests for Donations**

### **8.1-Church requests for cutting of the Churchyard**

The request for the donation to the cutting of the grass for the Litcham Churchyard will be added to the next meeting for consideration.

### **8.2- Litcham Common Conservation group**

The Councillors discussed the consideration of a donation to the Litcham common conservation group and they were all in favour to donate £300. This was proposed by Councillor Christie and Councillor Brookbank seconded the resolution on the authorisation of this payment.

## **9 Finances**

### **9.1 Balances and cheques for authorisation as circulated**

Councillor Brookbank proposed and Councillor Fagence seconded the resolution on the authorisation of the cheques.

### **9.2 Budgets to be circulated**

Councillor Oldfield proposed and Councillor Brookbank seconded the resolution on the Budgets that were circulated.

## **10. Matters for next meeting (not for discussion) to be added to the Agenda:**

Churchyard cutting and Precept

## **11. To Confirm the next meeting of Litcham Parish Council**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Meeting Closed 20.41

# FINANCE: 30th August 2020-30th Sept 2020

## Balances

### Community Account.

Balance at 17th August 2020	£11,250.14
Presented Cheques	£685.71
Direct Debit Haven Power	£82.80
Balance at 30th Sept 2020	<b>£10,481.63</b>

### Cheques for authorisation

Cheque number	Cheque payable to	Reason for Payment	Cheque amount
620	Norfolk Parish & Support	Yearly Subscription for NPTS	£61.25
621	Wix Ltd	Website Yearly Subscription	£82.80
622	D.K.Secker	British legion Poppy Appeal	£80.00
623	Chris Millward	Grass Cutting/Hedges cut	£275.00
624	T.T.Jones	Street lighting Oct-Nov-Dec	£145.43
625	Mr Moore	Street Lighting Rent	£7.50
626	D.K.Secker	Salary for Sept + Oct	£669.06
627	E. Christie	Community Car (awaiting invoice)	£0.00
628	Bryan Leigh	Final Invoice	£40.10

Total Amount Cheques to be paid **£1,361.14**

