

Lapford Parish Council

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 16th March 2021

The was a remote meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 7.30pm held on Zoom.

Members Present: Cllrs Ian Hemsworth (Chairman); Sue Briant-Evans; David Davenport; Julie Down; Donna Egan; Hilary Hassett; Peter Heal; Alex Shapland

Also Present: County Cllr. Margaret Squires and District Cllr. Clive Egington

In attendance: Rob Martin (Locum Clerk)

Others: Five members of the public – Roy Andrews, John Parsley, Bill Graham, Marilyn Davey, Pat Gove.

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES

21.50 No apologies had been received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

Personal Interests

21.51 The following personal interests in items on the agenda were declared:

- Item 5; Cllr Briant-Evans declared a personal interest on any discussions relating to the Heart of Lapford Development project as she is a member of the Board of Directors as an individual.
- Item 5; Cllr Hemsworth declared a personal interest on any discussions relating to the Heart of Lapford Development as he is a member of the Board of Directors as a representative of the Parish Council.

Standing Orders will be suspended and the Chairman to declare the meeting closed

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

21.52 Bill Graham said that Robert Gordon the new vicar was soon to be installed. He also stated that a great deal of high quality goods had been donated for sale with the proceeds to support the hall and LTP site. Once Covid measures had ceased the hall would be opened for a sale of these goods.

Roy Andrews of the Playing Field Committee stated that at the playing field northern boundary the Parish Council had erected a metal fence some 10ft from the hedgerow boundary and the area in between has become somewhere where Orchard Way residents were dumping rubbish. He asked what the Parish Council was going to do about it. Could the Playing Field Committee work with the Parish Council to find a solution?

The Chairman said that this was a tricky one, as the land was not part of the remit of Parish Council. He had been approached because of debris from the surrounding trees had fallen onto this land, and the responsibility for it needed to be sorted out. Cllr. Briant-Evans believed that the Playing Field Committee erected the fence. Cllr. Heal believed that the money for the fencing came from the sale of the tennis

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court, and that it was needed because the now filled-in ditch would be a hazard.

It was agreed that Roy would look at the deeds, and pass on any information he gained from that and that the matter would be on the agenda at next PC meeting. The Clerk would gather all the available information and write a report for that meeting.

Dr. John Parsley expressed concern that the concept of Lower Town Place providing a space for both children & dogs did not comply with the position quoted by ROSPA that playing fields & dogs don't mix. He believed that £75,000 of council taxpayers money had been spent on an ill thought out scheme without regard for safety. What was the Parish Council going to do about it?

The Chairman confirmed that he was the Parish Council representative on the HOLD Board for the Parish Council and that he had some sympathy with the sentiments expressed and that he will attempt to seek a resolution to consider restricting dogs on the site, in a timely manner.

4. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

21.53 To receive a verbal report for information.

4.1 Devon County Council

County Cllr. Squires did not have much to report except that the waste recycling centres were working during summer opening hours early due to the current demand. The Chairman added that Punchbowl Recycling Centre was to close from 16th to 24th March 2021 inclusive so that maintenance work could be carried out.

4.2 Mid Devon District Council

District Cllr. Egington reported on the conclusions of the MDDC budget meeting at which it was decided to add the maximum £5 per band D property, equating to a 2.39% increase. The normal maximum increase was only 1.99%, but smaller districts could add £5 to their requirement if that was a greater percentage. He also compared Council tax band D charges for nearby Towns and parishes with Lapford at £53.59, Chawleigh at £52.84, Crediton at £121.59 and Tiverton at £62.94. He believed the differences were interesting.

He also announced that the Independent cabinet Leader had reduced the size of the cabinet from 8 to 7 members.

5. LOCAL ORGANISATIONS' REPORTS

21.54 Reports from:

5.1 Lapford Church Green Trustees

Cllr. Briant-Evans had circulated the following report:

- The Trustees met via Zoom on 2nd March 2021
- It was hoped that work to refurbish the bank between the Green and Lower Town Place could begin towards the end of March or beginning of April. It was hoped that fundraising to support this work would begin in the near future.
- Work to refurbish the telephone kiosk would begin soon with the object of making it suitable as an exchange point for people to use in place of the Melissa Lake shelter which would be tidied up and a notice posted to explain the position.
- It was resolved to advertise the grass-cutting contract for 2021/22
- It was agreed to revise the list of bank account signatories.

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- A report was received about children entering the school grounds after hours and leaving portable goal posts on the area of the field dedicated as the night landing site for the Devon Air Ambulance. Action to be taken to alert the Chulmleigh Academy Trust.

5.2 Heart for Lapford Strategy Group

Cllr. Hassett explained that The Roadmap compiled by H4L was published in the March issue of the Lookout and set out the aims going forward for Lower Town Place. It is hoped that there will be responses from residents which can then be collated along with previous feedback. A copy of this Roadmap has also been placed on the Village Notice Board and Website as well as being added to the websites of some of the organisations which make up H4L. There will be several reports from constituent groups of H4L in the April Lookout.

Hedging has been planted along the border between the Orchard Way car park and Lower Town Place and apple cordons are planned for the road side border. It is hoped that it will be possible to hold some events on Lower Town Place this summer, but that is dependent upon further lifting of Covid restrictions.

5.3 Heart of Lapford Development Board

The Chairman reported that the development looks to be proceeding according to plan. He highlighted that the car park fence had been removed and replaced which improved things considerably. Work still had to be done on the Lower Town Place/Church Green entrance.

The expenditure so far had been £37,000, with VAT to be claimed back. There remained work to be done, such as the containers. They were on target to meet the 2-year period for the project.

5.4 Wallingbrook Patient Participation Group

Bill Graham reported that the Covid vaccination programme had gone well commenting that the Crediton station had worked well.

The Chairman to reconvene the meeting in line with Standing Orders

6. MINUTES

21.55 On a proposal by Cllr. Heal seconded by Cllr. Down the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th February 2021 were **Approved**.
Cllr. Hassett had not voted as she had not attended that meeting.

Action Grid – Julie

1. Writing to Steve Tucker at County Highways was ongoing, so far with nil response. Cllr. Squires suggested setting up a Zoom meeting with him to go through the list with photographs explaining what they want.
2. Telephone Kiosk – shelving etc – Cllr. Heal explained that the door was swollen and would not shut. He planned to take door off and adjust it. He also said that the repainting offer by Mr. Wilkie was still valid who had also offer to revamp the Melissa Lake Shelter. Roger Lake back in hospital and he had said to do whatever needed doing. Cllr Heal offered to talk to Ian Wilkie and would report back to next meeting.
3. The quotations for signs for the car park were still ongoing

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4. Weed spraying in the car parks had been parked until spring. Quotations were now required for the work.
5. The trees along boundary of playing field and Orchard Way had been discussed earlier, the outcome of the research undertaken by the Playing Field Committee would hopefully answer the questions.
6. The extension of highway gritting to the school had met with resistance, but was still ongoing.
7. Dog Signs – District Cllr. Egington had 15 with him that he would deliver to the Chairman for display.
8. Application for £500 from the Locality Fund for repairs to the Church Clock would be processed by the Locum Clerk.
9. The 30mph speed limit for top of village – Cllr. Squires confirmed that this will be progressed.
10. 2019/2020 Audit/Annual Accounts – The Locum Clerk reported that there were inconsistencies in the records. The forms are ready to be sent, and he had to go back to 2017/2018 to be able reconstruct accounts. The VAT claims for three years had to be sent. Ongoing, to be ready for next meeting.
11. Request for change in websites. The Chairman stated that Parish Council agendas & minutes were already on the village website, but the transfer was taking time. The intention was that all Lapford PC matters would be transferred to the village website. The Locum Clerk mentioned that the BT hosting service was finishing in May 2021 so something had to be done by then.
12. Lapford Parish Council By-Elections were on 6th May 2021 – adverts would be in the Lapford Lookout (April). It is still not certain how many vacancies there would be to fill.
13. LEAP Committee – The Committee has not met since the last Parish Council meeting but will meet again via Zoom on April 6th.
Agreed information plus a plea for volunteers for the Road Warden scheme were published in the March Lookout. Two volunteers have come forward. The LERT initiative continues to provide a service to the village.
14. Local Plan – The MDDC 'call for sites'. The Regeneration Committee had considered this, but concluded it was not for them to do it, as they were uncomfortable putting sites forward without having information on Lapford Housing Needs.
It was agreed that it was not appropriate for the Parish Council to put forward any suggestions by 22nd March 2021. District Cllr. Egington said that this activity was not necessarily for the PC to take part in, but they should take the chance to comment on the land that had been put forward by others when the opportunity came.
15. Bank signatory changes – still ongoing
16. LYPFT insurance to be paid. The LYPFT Chairman has been informed of this.
17. Footpaths P3 grant to be applied for - Ongoing
18. Footpaths – gates required instead of stiles - Ongoing Ian/Alex
19. Website – dealt with elsewhere
20. Flowerbed – will be done in future
21. Interim Clerk to be appointed – this was completed

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7. COUNCIL ADVISORY GROUPS

21.56 To receive updates of the following advisory group meetings and resolve whether to adopt recommendations therefrom:

7.1 Lapford Emergency Action Plan Committee

Already dealt with under the Action Grid

7.2 Regeneration Working Group

Already dealt with under the Action Grid

8. PLANNING MATTERS

21.58

8.1 APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
21/00289/HOUSE	2 Hillside Cottages Lapford Crediton Devon EX17 6QL	Creation of parking space, remove section of garden wall, reduce garden level by 225mm, erection of new dwarf garden wall and installation of timber gates Decision: Cllr. Heal would look at the application and contact other councillors for their thoughts.

8.2 APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

There were no further applications.

8.3 MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL DECISIONS

There were no decisions notified affecting the parish since the last meeting.

9. BANK RECONCILIATION

21.59 The Bank Reconciliation was **Approved**.

10. RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS TO DATE COMPARED TO BUDGET

21.60 The Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets statement for the period from 1st April 2020 to 28th February 2021 was **Noted**.

11. RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

21.61 The following list of payments were **Approved**.

PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Amount £	Payment No.
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2020/2021			
S Hemsworth	Orchard Centre Cleaning	52.00	Standing Order
Various	LERT Payments	243.01	Online
1&1 Internet	Website Hosting	2.40	Direct Debit

RECEIPTS

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2020/2021			
None			

12. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2019/20

21.62 This was deferred to the next meeting.

13. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2019/20

21.63 This was deferred to the next meeting.

14. INTERNAL AUDIT

21.64 On a proposal by Cllr. Heal, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans, it was **Resolved** to appoint Mel Bickell as Internal Auditor, to carry out audit inspections and provide reports for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.

15. DEVELOPMENT SITE ALLOCATION

21.65 This was already discussed in the Action Grid section.

16. GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

21.66 It was **Agreed** that both the Church Green and Parish Council grass-cutting contracts for 2021/2022 would be advertised in the April 2021 Lapford Lookout.

17. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

21.67 It was **Agreed** that an advertisement should be placed in the April 2021 Lapford Lookout encouraging local residents to stand for the 6 May 2021 parish council by-election.

18. PARISH ONLINE

21.68 On a proposal by Cllr. Briant-Evans it was **Resolved** that the Parish Council buy access to the Parish Online mapping service.

19. VETERINARY SURGERY

21.69 Concern was expressed that the veterinary surgery was no longer offering a small pet service, and appeared to be concentrating on equine care exclusively. This meant that people with small pets had to travel to Witheridge or further to get care for their animals.

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It was **Agreed** that the Locum Clerk would write to the surgery requesting information on whether this was the case, and asking why there had been no notification of it.

20. PARISH COUNCIL AGM AND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

21.70 The council considered when and how to hold these meetings, taking into consideration the gradual move away from COVID lockdown and the need to hold meetings in public from 7th May 2021.

It was **Agreed** to leave setting a date/venue until next the meeting, by which time there will be more certainty.

21. CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES RECEIVED

21.71 There had been no further correspondence or notices.

22. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

21.72 The Chairman had already raised the matter of the fallen tree in a previous item.

23. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

21.73 Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision-making.

Cllr. Heal brought up a caravan which was actually in Morchard Bishop. This would be reported. He also thought the Parish Online system would be good for the council.

21.74 Cllr Briant-Evans reported having been contacted by a member of the public regarding the safety of an open slurry pit off the lower part of Edgerley Lane. It was decided that the Planning conditions for the pit be checked and the matter reported on at the next meeting.

21.75. Cllr Briant-Evans reported having been contacted by a member of the public regarding the overcrowded conditions in which the youngest children at Lapford Primary School were being taught alongside the Pre-school children. Cllr Eginton undertook to make enquiries as to the result of the grant application for a new classroom building at the school.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 7:30 pm via Zoom. The deadline for agenda items is midday on the Friday two weeks preceding the meeting.

25. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a proposal by Cllr. Briant-Evans, seconded by the Chairman, it was **Resolved** to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the basis that the matters to be discussed were confidential.

26. CLOSE OF MEETING

The public meeting closed at 9.30pm

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27. **CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

The confidential section of the meeting dealt with:

- a) The agreement between the Parish Council and HOLD
- b) Matters relating to a former clerk
- c) Potential Illegal Development
- d) Illegal Bonfire
- e) Parish Council Inter-Relationships