

Lapford Parish Council

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 1st December 2021

There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Wednesday 1st December 2021 at 7.30pm held in the Victory Hall, Lapford

Members Present: Cllrs Peter Heal (Chairman); Julie Down; Roy Andrews; Sue Briant-Evans; Stacey Lumsdon; Pat Gowie; Abigail Whittaker; Alex Shapland.

Also Present: County Cllr Margaret Squires

In attendance: Rob Martin (Locum Clerk)

Others: 2 members of the public.

MINUTES

2122-142 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Parish Councillor John Parsley.

Apologies were also received from District Councillor Clive Eginton.

2122-143 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

There were no declarations of interest.

Standing Orders were suspended and the Chairman declared the meeting closed

2122-144 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No public questions were asked.

2122-145 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

To receive a verbal report for information.

- a) Devon County Council – County Cllr. Squires reported that she had met with Steve Tucker for the first time since they had both suffered from Covid and they had conducted a drive-around Steve's area which had touched on Lapford, but had not come through the village. The Chairman would be arranging a meeting with Steve to discuss the urgent requirements for the parish.

The County Cllr. Reported that Devon County Council, in common with others, was having difficulty recruiting social workers and other care professionals which was compromising its performance in this area of work.

- b) Mid Devon District Council – District Cllr. Eginton could not attend and had nothing particular to report at this meeting.

2122-146 LOCAL ORGANISATIONS' REPORTS

- a) Lapford Church Green Trustees – Cllr. Briant-Evans had circulated the minutes of the Charity Annual General Meeting held on 24th November 2021 (copy attached to these minutes)

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On a proposal by Cllr. Lumsdon, seconded by Cllr. Gowie it was **Resolved** to grant £2,000 to the Reinstatement of the Church Green Bank.

- b) Heart for Lapford Strategy Group – no report
- c) Heart of Lapford Development Board – the Chairman of HOLD had sent a report to council (copy attached to these minutes). Of particular concern was the fact that the parish council representative on the HOLD board had not been nominated. The council had previously nominated Cllr. Parsley for this role but he had expressed reservations in doing so. In addition, HOLD were waiting for a joint finance meeting with the council. Finally HOLD would be holding consultations on the proposal to change from a CBS to a charity in early 2022, and the details would come out shortly.
- d) Bill Graham updated the parish council further on the progress with flu and covid vaccinations.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in line with Standing Orders

2122-147

MINUTES

On a proposal by the Cllr. Whittaker, seconded by Cllr. Down the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd November 2021 were **Adopted** as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

The Locum Clerk had not been able to produce his initial report on Lower Town Place in time for this meeting, but had made progress with it. It would be put before the Council when he was comfortable with it.

The movements in the Action List since the last meeting were:

- a) The **Neighbourhood Highways Officer**, Steve Tucker had been unwell, see the County Councillor's Report above.
- b) The **car park signage** had been manufactured and collected from the supplier by the Chairman. He would put the signs up as soon as possible.
- c) As it had been agreed that **weed spraying** would not be done, this item would come off the list going forward.
- d) The **boundary of the playing field trees** were being done.
- e) Natwest Bank had still not sorted out the new **signatories** even though the Chairman had sent his signature in on the system. It was just a case of waiting for the application to be processed.
- f) The **church clock** is subject to consideration below.
- g) Cllr. Briant-Evans outlined some potential **PROW** work which Cllr. Shapland would look at.

2122-148

COUNCIL ADVISORY GROUPS

a) Lapford Emergency Action Plan Committee

Cllr. Briant-Evans had circulated the minutes of the LEAP group earlier in the day. She then highlighted the matters arising from that meeting, including:

- An update on the Road Warden involvement such as Cllr. Gowie having finished her training, Cllr Andrews still to undertake the training.
- The question of insurance cover whilst acting as Road Warden, which the Locum Clerk indicated was in place with wardens acting as volunteers on

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behalf of the Parish Council.

- It was important to have each task undertaken recorded
- Cllr. Andrews would make arrangements to take over the role.
- Additional grit bins were required
- Concerns about the lack of action on necessary highway work would be taken up with representatives of the District, County and possibly the MP

A copy of the LEAP minutes is attached to these minutes. Cllr Heal to address these matters in the first instance.

b) Regeneration Working Group

Nothing further to add.

2122-149 VILLAGE CLOCK

The Locum Clerk had circulated a report outlining the options available to the parish council for the village clock. These ranged from doing nothing at zero cost to providing a long-term solution which totalled £8,117 (excluding VAT) with interim options between.

On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **Agreed** that this should be the subject of a public consultation to get the views of the community on the matter. There would be a return-slip incorporated into the next (January 2022) edition of the Lapford Lookout and on the parish council website, asking which of the options the community wanted.

2122-150 LAPFORD YOUTH AND PLAYING FIELD TRUST (LYPFT) – TREE FELLING

A tree surgeon had surveyed the trees surrounding the playing field with the conclusion that there would be a total of £4,000 of work to cover all trees. When the work was whittled down to what has to be done immediately for health and safety and Ash die-back reasons the work then amounted to £1,900 which was being requested of the Parish Council by LYPFT.

On a proposal by Cllr. Lumsdon, seconded by Cllr. Gowie, it was unanimously **Resolved** that the parish council fund the identified necessary work in the sum of £1,900, preferably by ordering the work directly with the contractor.

2122-151 GRANT REQUESTS

On a proposal by Cllr. Briant-Evans, seconded by Cllr. Lumsdon, it was **Resolved** to make the following grant payments:-

- a) Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal - £30 (Section 137)
 - b) Mid Devon Mobility - £100 (section 137)
- Mid Devon Mobility would be invited to make a short presentation to the parish council at a future meeting to inform councillors of the work undertaken.

The Locum Clerk indicated that the current process of considering grants was haphazard and needed to be rationalised. He would for a future meeting prepare a grant giving policy and application form for local organisations to complete when requesting grant aid.

2122-152 INTERNAL AUDIT

On a proposal by Cllr. Whittaker, seconded by Cllr. Down it was unanimously **Resolved** that the company IAC be appointed as Internal Auditor for a three-year period.

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The precise basis of the appointment will to some extent be dependent on whether Chawleigh, Clyst Honiton or Rackenford parish councils wish to have the same outcome, as between the four parishes two days work would be necessary and the cost of this time split evenly between them.

The basis of charge is a half at £385, for two days to cover the 4 parishes, makes £770. This would then be reduced by 5% if a three-year contract is entered into, making the overall total £731.50. Once this is divided equally between the parishes a lowest charge of £182.88 results. If none of the other councils want this arrangement the charge just for Lapford for 3 years would be £270.75 per annum.

2122-153

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE & EMAIL ADDRESSES

The new parish council website was now accessible on www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk and this would be published in the Lapford Lookout to ensure the message was seen by the public. The Locum Clerk requested that councillors supply him with some photographs for the front page and the gallery page and it was agreed that all who had such pictures would send them directly to Rob.

Three councillors had not started using the parish council email addresses set up for its work. The Locum Clerk stressed, supported by the Chairman, that this was essential as soon as possible, so that the council could become GDPR compliant. The Chairman outlined the personal position of councillors not doing so which could involve disclosure of all of their personal email correspondence to satisfy an ICO investigation into a FOI request.

Thanks were given to the Locum Clerk for making this happen.

The Locum Clerk expressed concern about the parish council computer records were stored on the hard drive of the council laptop. He suggested that buying sufficient access on the 'Dropbox' system would ensure that the files were stored remotely, backed up daily and could be made available to councillors and new clerks whatever happened to the laptop. He said this access would cost £79.90 plus VAT and, on a proposal by Cllr. Lumsdon, seconded by Cllr. Andrews it was unanimously **Resolved** that the Locum Clerk make this happen immediately. Rob said that there would be a lot of work in ensuring the files were rationalised before being moved across.

2122-154

PLANNING MATTERS

a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

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Reference	Location	Proposal
21/01785/FULL	Nathannah, 10A Westgate Lapford Crediton	Variation of Conditions 2 and 3 of Planning Permission 19/00704/FULL to allow for the substitution of Elevations plan and materials. Decision: OBJECTION on the basis that the change of use from a garage to accommodation will exacerbate an already difficult car parking problem in that part of the village.

b) APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

None

c) MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL DECISIONS

Reference	Location	Proposal	Decision
21/01694/TPO	Graveyard Church of St Thomas of Canterbury Lapford Devon	Application to crown lift 3 Sycamores and 1 Common Beech, protected by Tree Preservation Order 05/00003/TPO	Consent Granted
21/01443/FULL	Land at NGR 273054 108706 (Clevelands) Rensy Lane Lapford Devon	Conversion of agricultural building to dwelling	Permission Granted
21/01762/HOUSE	Cepheus Popes Lane Lapford Crediton	Erection of a garage	Permission Granted

These decisions were **Noted**

d) APPEAL DECISION

The following appeal decision has been issued since the last meeting.

Reference	Location	Proposal
None		

2122-155

BANK RECONCILIATION

The 30th November 2021 Bank Reconciliation statement, was **Approved**.

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2122-156 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS TO DATE COMPARED TO BUDGET

The attached statement of Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets for the period from 1st April 2021 to 30th November 2021 was received.

2122-157 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Gowie the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting, were unanimously **Approved**.

PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Amount £	Payment No.
2021/2022			
S Bragg	LTP Boundary Fence	208.00	Chq 1509
DC Bragg	LTP Gate Construction	658.28	212212
RJ Martin	Locum Clerk Services Nov 21	953.97	212212
Victory Hall	Room Hire Oct 21	12.00	212212
L Duddridge	Footpath Lighting	75.00	212212
WEP Fire Protection	Fire Protection Inspection	52.80	212212
S. Hemsworth	Cleaning – December 2021	52.00	SO
1&1 Ionos	Email Access – December 2021	2.40	DD
BT Group	Telephone & Broadband December 2021	41.28	DD
RBL Poppy Appeal	Wreath	30.00	Chq 1510
Dropbox	Access to Expanded Capacity	95.88	212213
Bill Graham	Gift for Andy Hill for abseiling the church tower	30.00	212214
Sue Briant-Evans	Toilet Cleaning Consumables	7.05	212214
Mike Leach	Grass Cutting	315.00	212214

RECEIPTS

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2021/2022			
HMRC	VAT Refund to 30 Sept 21	384.90	BGC

2122-158 2022/2023 BUDGET & PRECEPT

The locum clerk had circulated further analyses for budget and precept consideration. He focussed on the council tax charge to be levied for Parish Council activities on a Band D property. The two options considered were keeping the charge at the current level of £53.59 or balancing the budget with an amount sufficient to cover the budgeted expenditure which required an increase of £2.02 per annum to £55.61. The precept would

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then amount to £22,216 in total.

On a proposal by Cllr. Briant-Evans, seconded by Cllr. Whittaker it was **Resolved** to levy a precept of £22,216 for the year beginning 1st April 2022, or a Band D charge of £55.61.

A chart of some sort would be devised to communicate the effect on the overall Council Tax bills for the people of the village to ensure that the perspective of a 3.77% increase was plain, at a time when inflation is generally 3%+. The increase is needed to ensure good financial management at a time of great uncertainty.

2122-159 CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTICES RECEIVED

To note the correspondence received for circulation and to resolve to action any matters arising as appropriate

None not already circulated.

2122-160 MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

None

2122-161 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Cllr Andrews discussed the possibility of supporting Lapford Voluntary Car Aid in the future. It was agreed to look for grant opportunities which might be helpful.
- Cllr Briant-Evans reported that:
 - 1) The Chair will attend the Autumn briefing with County Cllr John Hart and report back
 - 2) MDDC Planning Training to take place on Jan 20th via Zoom
 - 3) Whole PC basic training to be arranged by the Locum Clerk, probably in conjunction with Chawleigh PC
 - 4) The Lapford Post Office site requires updating. Cllr Gowie to speak to the PO staff about this.
 - 5) Cllr Heal to pursue the matters of noise and other issues at Pope's Wood and Eastmere Farm, and the matter of the slurry pit off Edgerley Lane
 - 6) An update on questions relating to the PC/Hold Grant agreement and the Land registry required.

2122-162 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Lapford Parish Council is scheduled for Wednesday 6th January 2022 at 7.30pm. The deadline for agenda items is midday on the Friday two weeks preceding the meeting.

(Post Meeting Note – the meeting was rearranged subsequently to be on 18th January 2022 because of the difficulty caused by the Christmas/New Year break)

2122-163 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **Resolved** that under section 1(2) of The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from

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the meeting during consideration of items of business as publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted as it involves the likely disclosure of personnel, commercially sensitive or legal matters.

2122-164

CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 10.05pm

Signed:  Chairman

Date: 18/2/2022