

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS HELD ON MONDAY 22 MAY 2017 AT 7.30PM AT THE PAVILION, FRIENDLESS LANE, FLAMSTEAD**

**Number: 2/2017**

Present: Cllr Vince Picton (Chairman), Cllr Steve McCurdy (Vice Chairman), Cllrs Julian Taunton, Chris Cadman, Tim Parsons, Stephen Browne, Sandra Clark, Andrew Lambourne

Also present: Caroline Freer – Clerk;  
Members of the public

1. **Election of Chairman** and receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office  
It was proposed by Cllr Taunton to nominate Cllr Picton, seconded by Cllr Browne, all agreed.
2. **Election of Vice Chairman** and receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office  
It was proposed by Cllr Cadman to nominate Cllr McCurdy, seconded by Cllr Picton, all agreed.
3. **To receive and approve apologies for absence.** None
4. **To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items.** Item 17 planning application for land on River Hill as owned by Cllr McCurdy.
5. **To consider requests for dispensation as appropriate.** None
6. **To resolve that the minutes of the PC meeting on 24th April 2017 are a correct record.** Clerk to add an amendment re Cllr Clark being out of church at the time Cllr Humphreys was nominated for the Staffing WG.
7. **To review Working Groups** as required and the Terms of Reference of Working Groups to be reviewed by June meeting. Communications: add Cllr McCurdy and Lambourne; Finance: Cllrs Parsons, Picton, Taunton, Browne, Cadman and the Clerk; Policy Review: Cllr Parsons and the Clerk; Pavilion Management/Environment: Cllrs Picton and Parsons; Pavilion Development: Cllrs Picton, Taunton, Clark and the Clerk; Rural Protection: Cllrs Browne, Clark and Rob Madden was co-opted for his planning expertise; Playground: Cllr Browne and the Clerk; Staffing WG: Cllrs Browne, Taunton, Clark and Cadman; Business /Broadband: Cllr Cadman; Luton Airport: Cllrs Lambourne, Clark and Ted Alford; Strategy and Business: Cllrs Picton, Clark and Lambourne.  
Representatives on outside bodies:  
David Humphreys to remain as representative on the Village Hall and the Almshouses HAPTC – Cllr Clark  
Luton Airport: Ted Alford in addition to Cllrs Clark and Lambourne  
War memorial: Simon Goodwin
8. **Public and press participation (15 minutes maximum)**  
Several members of the public made representations regarding the application for Londis branding shop signage at the village store. There was very strong opposition to the application which had been supported by photos which were flawed as the Lottery and bureau de change sign were not shown and the colouring was inconsistent. There

is plenty of signage already and questions were asked as to what the business benefits would be from having a long sign across the store, to have signage on a neighbour's driveway (to which access would have to be sought) plus a swinging sign. Such inappropriate signage is not in keeping with the conservation area of the village. It was unclear whether permission from the property owners had been given. Fundamentally it would change the rural appearance of the High St which will not benefit the village. All 16 members of the public present objected to the application. The Heritage agencies are to be contacted for advice if necessary. Comments for the Planning Dept: The shop is in the Conservation area of the village and as such an aluminium sign with Londis branding would be a significant change to the front of the store and would not be in keeping with the traditional look of the shop. Furthermore the photos supplied with the application are flawed in that they do not show the Lottery sign nor the Bureau de Change sign which have been erected above the door. Submitting the suggestion that advertising posters should be installed in the window cavities of the outside wall is wholly unacceptable as permission for access over the neighbour's driveway would have to be sought in order to attach the posters to the wall. An illuminated lime green and white sign would not blend into the street scene especially as the shop is attached to and opposite from historic buildings within the Conservation area. The Parish Council would ask that DBC ascertains whether the actual owner of the property has given permission for these changes to take place as in the past she has refused to allow any changes to the external fabric of the building. The suggestion of a swinging Londis sign over the doorway would also create a potential hazard and as well as ruining the traditional street scene. Strong objection from the PC.

Other matters from the public:

A question was asked as to the outcome of the pavilion survey.

A question was raised about the confusion over the number of Flamstead/village websites which are out of date. Could the site run by Paul McMahon be updated or could the Scarecrow Festival news be transferred to a working site?

Bungalow application: It was confirmed that a comment of "No objections" was posted on the DBC portal. Cllr McCurdy's concerns were noted regarding the need for awareness of multiple applications which are applied for separately and then added together to make an extra-large house.

- 9. Casual Vacancy:** Following the resignation of 2 councillors it was agreed to advertise the vacancies on the Grapevine and the notice boards. The Staffing WG are to ascertain their terms of reference in advance of the recruitment process. Deadline for candidates to register their interest is 9 June.

**10. Clerks' Report:**

Subsidence letter: to be signed off to authorise receipt of settlement.

Playground Demo Day June 2<sup>nd</sup>; the council agreed to host the event. Clerk to advertise it. Clerk to explore extra funding from DBC.

Road Sweeper Report: Following the recent visit of sweeper, some roads could not be cleaned so it was proposed by Cllr Lambourne, seconded by Cllr Picton to get the sweeping finished in the most cost effective way possible. All agreed.

A new dog waste bin was installed in Old Watling St. Clerk to arrange the emptying service.

Fence quote: £240 to erect post and rail fencing and plant young shrub whips. This was inadvertently omitted to be discussed at the meeting but Clerk to confirm to VGS to install the fence as advised by Cllr Picton following the meeting.

A5 egress pressure: As County Cllr Terry Douris no longer has the portfolio for the A5, his replacement will be taking up the cause. No action will be taken until a period of 6 months has passed to adequately monitor any changes to the volume of traffic on the A5. The Clerk is to invite Terry Douris and his successor to the September PC meeting.

**11. Dragons' Den Report:** Tim Parsons reported on the project outcome.

FCC would receive £463 for their younger players and £200 to pay towards the netting. Total: £663.

The Pre school requested funds for a wooden gazebo for their allotment area.

However wooden structures are not permitted on the allotments. The Clerk is to ask the Pre School to reapply for a collapsible one, should that be suitable. (Up to £200 should be adequate for this).

The Guides/Brownies/Rainbows applied for funding towards a zip wire which can cost up to £10,000 to buy and install.

Therefore it was decided to fund the FCC project, the collapsible gazebo and the balance will be put towards the playground fund but earmarked for the zip wire. As the recreation ground is owned by the Parish Council, it would not be possible for the Guides to oversee the installation of a zip wire. The Parish Council will assist with the funding and seek agreement as to a suitable location. The guides may also like to organise fund raising for the zip wire. Clerk to check Public Liability issues.

**12. Working Group Reports:**

Pavilion: Cllr Clark reported on the results of the survey and quotes had been sourced already from 2 companies. One provides the structure only (Passmores) and the other company will provide a full turnkey service. Passmores requires £2,000 up front which is refunded off final total costs.

Cllr Clark requested a budget to progress drawings etc.

It was proposed by Cllr Taunton and seconded by Cllr Picton to earmark £5,000 for costs, subject to the usual financial controls.

Luton A/P: Cllr Lambourne and Ted Alford have agreed to complete the Dept of Transport Consultation paper on which they will report.

Monthly website update: There is confusion over a number of websites and it is requested that the obsolete ones are removed or updated. The Clerk is to update the website following relevant training and will in future deal direct with the site designer. It was suggested that search engine optimisation is investigated.

**13. Warden Tasks** – Tennis net to go up. Rather belatedly the Clerk wanted to thank Aubrey Brett for painting the bollards in the overspill car park.

**14. Internal Audit Timetable:** Annual Governance statement (Part 1 of Annual Return) and Accounting Statements (Part 2 of the Annual Return) to be approved at June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting following the Internal Audit.

**15. Finance:** To consider receipts and payments reports from 25 April-May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017, to consider expenditure against budget report to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017 as circulated - To authorise payments as itemised; to approve bank reconciliations to April 30<sup>th</sup> 2017. Also the Clerk reported again on the payments and receipts to 24 April 2017 which were not on the accounting system at the April meeting – to ensure accuracy. It was proposed by Cllr Cadman and seconded by Cllr Parsons to approve the accounts as presented. All agreed

**16. Planning: New Applications**

Ref: 4/00781/17/FUL: The Bungalow, Hollybush Lane for the demolition of existing building and garage and construction of replacement dwelling and garage; No change to April's comments of No comments.

Ref: 4/00787/17/FUL - Land at River Hill – proposed alteration to levels to provide additional space for the adjacent horticultural nursery. The application was discussed in full and Steve McCurdy was able to provide insight into the need for expansion and the history behind the site. Feedback for the pre-submission meetings with DBC had been positive as the planners saw no reason why the application would not be successful subject to full planning permission. Views were also expressed by members of the public who were generally against the loss of vista and adverse effect on wildlife. After full discussions, the following comments were agreed by 6 councillors to 1. Cllr McCurdy left the meeting for the vote.

The PC strongly objects to a move which would be a further substantial step in the already disproportionate space in the village occupied by Majestic Trees for the storage of trees in pots. The village is not sufficiently large to accommodate further land use for this purpose since it is having an increasingly adverse impact on the appearance of the landscape and as such is out of keeping. To replace the rural vista of a meadow with artificially graded terracing with hard standing, gravel and underground irrigation pipes to store tubs of trees is a fundamental change to the topography of the local environment combined with the inevitable consequences of noise disturbance from delivery and fork lift vehicles. The PC has significant concern that this degrades a meadow into a brownfield site which could then in future make it more vulnerable to development. Furthermore there are genuine concerns about the loss of habitat for the wildlife which thrives in and around the river Ver. The PC would very much hope that the planning department would reject this application. For your interest, the unique oak bench at the top of the meadow was installed at a cost of £2,000 by the River Ver Society for the purpose of enabling walkers to enjoy the views down to the river Ver. Furthermore, it was suggested that an escrow account be requested to set aside funds to restore the land to its former state should the planning officers support the application.

Ref: 4/00902/17/ADV for aluminium fascia pan and hanging projection sign at the Village Shop, 21 High St – Strong objection as under item 8.

**Planning Applications received between 15 and 22 May 2017:** Rose Cottage. No objections, all agreed

Action: it was agreed that for planning applications which are received after the agenda has been posted but before the PC meeting to which it refers, the Clerk will circulate this additional applications via the Grapevine.

**17 Correspondence:** Road Safety Fund - Cllr Picton was able to announce that the bid had been successful and a new solar powered speed indicator will be installed on Singlets Lane opposite God's Acre. A second fitment will also be installed on Trowley Hill Rd so the device can be moved to a second location.

There was a query over the white lines on the rec and it was suggested they may have been burnt in. The Warden only uses paint, so it has to be assumed that DBC may have set the lines with something more corrosive than regular line paint. Clerk to ask VGS to make repairs. Action: The Pavilion Management/Environment WG is to meet regularly during the football season to monitor the wear and tear to the recreation ground.

A letter was received regarding the untidy brambles/unruly hedging along Friendless Lane. Action – Clerk to ask Warden to action without damage to the nesting birds.

The Clerk had received a call from Paul Harris of Gt Gaddesden re neighbourhood action with an invitation to a Flamstead councillor to attend the meeting on 24 May. Cllr Picton to attend.

### **18 Items for consideration at next meeting on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2017**

Meeting ended: 10pm

Vince Picton  
Chairman  
Date: 22 May 2017

