

Longdon, Queenhill & Holdfast Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Monday 20th March 2017** at **7:30pm** at the **Village Hall, Longdon.**

Present: Chairman R Thatcher, Cllrs B Mansbridge, Mrs J. Beswick, W. Austin, C Taylor-Hall, J Unwin, Mrs N Inchbald, M. Taylor.

Attending: Clerk to the Council, Hazel Robinson.

031720MES – Meeting status: The Chairman welcomed the newly appointed clerk, Hazel Robinson to the meeting and affirmed her appointment as Proper Officer in preparing and circulating the notice, Summons and Agenda for future meetings and in recording the minutes of the meeting.

Council members voted unanimously in favour of the appointment of the new clerk.

170320AAD - Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Council received apologies from Cllr G Inchbald. Declarations of Interest were given by Cllrs Mrs J Beswick and M Taylor with any matters pertaining to the Village Hall.

170320ADP –Adoption of Minutes:

Members of the Council agreed and adopted the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 9th January 2017.

170320CRS – Reports from District and County Councillors

None – none in attendance.

170320PLA – Planning Matters

The planning application for Green Farm was briefly discussed.

The double garage extension at the old Police House was discussed. None of the Councillors were aware of any planning applications for this extension. There was also some concern the owner may have moved the bridleway.

Action: Clerk to contact MHDC Enforcement Officer Daniel Williams to check if there has been a planning application.

Action: Clerk to contact Footpaths Officer to check on situation with bridleway.

170320 - ADM – Administration

- a) The Village Green play equipment was discussed. 50% of the cost had already been paid and the remaining 50% would be paid on sign off once the Council members were happy with it. There is a 25 year guarantee on the play equipment so council members did not feel additional inspection and maintenance packages were needed. The Chairman had notified the Insurance Company of the play equipment and they were now ensured up to the sum of £50,000. Further discussion took place about celebrating the news of the play equipment through an article in the parish magazine. Additional signage was discussed such as a plaque which would bear the names of the

Hazel Robinson, Clerk to Longdon, Queenhill & Holdfast Parish Council.

Tel: [07882617730](tel:07882617730)

Email: clerk@longdonworcs-pc.gov.uk

parties who had contributed to the play equipment project, a sign informing users that using the equipment was at their own risk and a phone number being available should any issues occur.

Action: Cllrs N Inchbald and J Beswick would put forward an article and photo for next month's parish magazine.

- b) The VAS unit is on order and is expected at the end of this month. As the grant is only for this financial year the invoice from the company will be dated for this financial year. The old VAS unit has not yet been sent away for repair. The Clerk of Bushley Parish Council has requested the invoice for the 40% that they are contributing.

Action: The Chairman will send the Clerk at Bushley Parish Council the invoice requested.

- c) Cllr Austin, having previously circulated the grievance and disciplinary procedures for the post of Clerk to the Council, briefly outlined the key points in the procedures and made three recommendations. The 3 recommendations were;
 - 1) That the Chairman of the Council is also the Chairman of the Appeal Meeting for both procedures as this decision is final.
 - 2). That the wording 'Staffing Committee' be changed to "the Parish Council"
 - 3) That all decisions must be conveyed in writing to the individual concerned.

There were no questions. Council members agreed unanimously to both procedures, to include the recommendations made.

Action: Cllr Austin to send copies of the procedures to the Clerk of the Council and the Lengthsman.

- d) The Lengthsman has provided worksheets - he is currently doing less hours than he is employed to do. The Lengthsman Contract from WCC for the next financial year has been received by Cllr G Inchbald. The Lengthsman will not be available to cut the grass in the summer. The Chairman offered to get the village green topped and to strim round the play area. Questions were asked about contract length and conditions for the Lengthsman. The contract runs until October 2017- It was agreed to leave it do so and keep an eye on work done.

The issue with verges at the Queenhill loop road being in a bad state due to buses and minibuses conflict was briefly discussed.

Action: The Chairman will arrange for the village green to be topped and to strim around the play area once it becomes dry enough.

- e) The Council noted that functional notice boards would be essential before the next Council elections in May. Currently there is one missing and the one at Hill End is propped up. Refurbishment of noticeboards is needed.

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Action: The Chairman will resolve these issues.

- f) The Longdon school site and how monies could be obtained to buy it was discussed and if WCC would consider buying it. A clear plan of action would be needed regardless of who bought would be needed and people with the time and inclination to manage this would also be essential. No one had volunteered to take this forward and previously when the idea of a free school had been proposed there had been no interest either. The need for a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was discussed and the various issues it could focus on to help improve the local area. Council members felt it was worth finding out if parishioners would want an NDP and that having the option to respond via a S.A.E or a web survey would be the best course of action. A budget for this work had already been agreed at a previous council meeting. Council members agreed unanimously agree that the following actions would be taken;

Actions:

- 1) A final draft of the flyer would be completed – Cllr N Inchbald
- 2) The flyer would be approved and printed in the next 3 weeks – Cllr N Inchbald
- 3) An e-survey set up with a weblink to add to the flyer and council website – Clerk of the Council.

The above actions would be complete within the month so that public responses would then be available for the next council meeting.

- g) The Council's interest in purchasing the telephone box has been acknowledged and due to high demand the Council's application has been placed on a "holding list".
- h) There has been little movement on the Broadband rollout. Cllr Taylor-Hall has had no response from Rob Stepniewski, Broadband Officer at WCC. Superfast Worcestershire would not be rolling out Broadband in the area. There has been no recent communication from Gigaclear and issues have been raised about if what they were offering to deliver would come to fruition.

Action: Cllr J Beswick to email her contact at Gigaclear.

- i) Relationship with Village Hall and future car park grant – the car park needs refurbishment and the agreement about the rights of the car park states that the car park can be used by the whole of Longdon. There have been some issues with residents parking long term on the car park and dumping cars there. The Village Hall will be approaching the Parish Council for the cost of the refurbishment. The Chairman requested that the legal agreement pertaining to the rights of car park users and the figures for the refurbishment be emailed to the Council in order to make an informed decision.

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Action: Cllr J Beswick to circulate the agreement and refurbishment figures to council members.

170320FIN – Accounts and Financial Matters

Payment of accounts presented was agreed as follows:

1. Ben Perry. £68.80 and £119.50 (Jan/Feb) Maintenance & Lengthsmen duties.
2. Chairman R Thatcher. £53. The Purchase of retirement presents for the previous Lengthsman on behalf of the Council.
3. Creative Play - £2991 (2nd payment) – for the Play area.
4. Parish Church Commissioners – for the Queenhill Church Graveyard Maintenance Grant £110
5. Village Hall Grant for roof maintenance £275 (invoice needed - Cllr J Beswick to email to The Chairman)
6. Renewal of Annual membership of Information Commissioner's Office £35.

Other Financial Matters:

The Council had been approached by the Hunter's Inn, Longdon about an Application for a Discretionary Rural Rate Relief. There were three options available – the council unanimously agreed to option B which was not to make a financial contribution and to acknowledge the Inn as a valuable business which would allow the Inn to 25% rate relief.

The Council bank account is still registered in the name of the previous clerk. The new clerk would contact the bank and take the necessary steps to update the records.

Action: Clerk of the Council to contact Lloyds Bank.

170320 DFM – Future Meetings:

The meeting dates were set for the year for the following dates - For 2017 - 8th May - Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, 3rd July, 4th September, 6th November and in 2018 – 8th January and 5th March.

170320 DNM – Next Meetings:

The next meeting was agreed to take place on Monday 8th May 2017 at 7:30pm which would be the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 9pm.