

LOXHORE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

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Minutes

Date: Thursday 5th July 2018

Venue: Loxhore Village Hall

Present: Julie Moir {Chair}
David Smith {Vice Chair}
Mike Bowden {Councillor}
Chris Bryars {Councillor & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)}
Carole Delve {Councillor}
Jane Vanstone {Planning Applicant} left 18:51
Alison Barr {Parishioner} left 18:31
Toni Carter {Parishioner} left 18.31
Ray Comer {Parishioner}
Syd Delve {Parishioner}
Chris Harrington {Parishioner} arrived 18:22
Liz Murphy {Parishioner} left 18:51
Kim Seggons {Parishioner} left 18:50
Anne Tester {Parishioner}

Minuted by: Priscilla Gellatly {Acting Clerk}

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:00, welcoming all those present and in particular Mike Bowden, the newly co-opted Parish Councillor.

Following the resignation of Mike Matthews, Mike Bowden had agreed to be co-opted to act as Parish Councillor on 29th June 2018. He signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form (to be retained by the Clerk), agreed to observe the Code of Conduct (the NDC version, which was formally adopted by Loxhore Parish Council at the meeting on 5th July 2012 §5.5) and completed and signed a Register of Interests form (also to be retained by the Clerk).

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Andrea Davis and Malcolm Prowse.
2. Declarations of interest: CB and DS declared interests in §5.3 as they both own holiday cottages.
3. All councillors present agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th May 2018 were a true and accurate record of that spoken and the Chair signed accordingly.

4.0	<p><u>Action points from previous meeting dated 25th May 2018</u></p> <p>NB §4.4 was dealt with as the first item in this section.</p>	
4.1	<p>4.1 Local Needs Survey (see also 16th November 2017 §4.0, 4th January 2018 §4.1 and 16th March §4.1)</p> <p>There was no further update as MP was not present.</p>	MP
4.2	<p>4.3 Treasurer's Report (see also 16th November 2017 §6.0, 4th January 2018 §4.5 and 16th March §4.3)</p> <p>CB was still not able to give his report itemising the work that Lineal Software Solutions Ltd. has completed but will meet with Mike Matthews before the next meeting in order to do this.</p> <p>Regarding the broadband provision in Loxhore, Mike Bowden had heard back from BT with their suggestion of a very expensive option. MB will speak further with BT but if this is their only solution and if Airband also offers no reasonable solution he will follow up initial talks with Mike Matthews (Lineal) with a view to expanding the current Lineal network.</p>	CB MB
4.3	<p>4.6 Parish Paths Partnership (See also 16th March §5.4)</p> <p>CB reported that a grant of £886 had been obtained to grade the path past the Seggons' barns (Red Lane), which is currently very rutted and with deep mud at the bottom, and to divert the water which currently flows from the fields down the path towards Hill Woods and is causing serious erosion. Simon Houghton (DCC, Area Rights of Way Warden (North)) brought the likely contractor, Ian Woollacott, to look at the issues and in an email received by CB on 3rd July SH said that the contractor is hoping to get on site in the next couple of weeks. Mr and Mrs Seggons are aware of what is planned. Simon Houghton will contact Syd Delve as he has offered to assist with some of the digging in the area leading to Hill Woods.</p>	CB
4.4	<p>5.2 Snow Clearance</p> <p>NB This item was dealt with at the beginning of 'Action points from meeting held on 25th May 2018'</p> <p>JM asked those present for a recap on what had happened during the heavy snowfall earlier in the year. Toni Carter had contacted Mike Matthews (then the Chair of the PC) to ask if the PC could organise some snow clearance. She had then paid Gary Heal herself for him to clear some of it. However, the cleared sections remained very slippery. Liz Murphy had been concerned about possible medical emergencies during the time when the roads were blocked. Some years ago Steve Shapland, then a Parish Councillor, had purchased a small salt spreader and had used this on a few occasions when the roads were icy, but the clearance of snow had always been carried out by parishioners themselves, as and when needed.</p> <p>MB asked whether Carl Seggons would be able to clear snow, but Kim Seggons said that he did not have suitable equipment and although his tractor could push snow along it would not be able to clear it off the road. If there was a medical emergency a tractor would be able to carry a person on a stretcher through the blocked roads. However, JM said that such emergencies should really be left to the professional emergency services to deal with.</p>	

	<p>JM said she and DS had looked at the Devon Highways website to find out about the Snow Warden Scheme. Someone would have to volunteer to become a Snow Warden and this would entail not only training but a commitment to liaise with DCC, order grit supplies, keep a register of local trained volunteers, receive and respond locally to weather reports, organise and deploy volunteers to clear snow and to spread grit when icy conditions are forecast and encourage the responsible use of the grit. Expecting someone to volunteer to take on such an onerous task is unrealistic and therefore unacceptable to the PC. With regards to insurance, DCC will cover the public liability insurance for voluntary work so long as it is undertaken in a safe manner and according to DCC advice. If a farm vehicle is used it must be suitably insured for snow clearance. If the person is paid there is no cover at all from DCC. The PC should not consider paying anyone to do snow clearance but if there was a volunteer workforce to clear snow at their own risk, this would be acceptable.</p> <p>Everybody agreed that there should be a resilience plan in place in the event of another exceptional fall of snow and ideas were explored. If a severe weather warning is issued, people should prepare by stocking up with essential food and medical items and if travel by car is absolutely necessary a car could be left at the bottom of the hill. In icy conditions people could grit the roads near them and clear the driveways of vulnerable neighbours if snow fell. People with suitable vehicles could offer lifts to work or to the shops. There is no grit box at Loxhore Cott so this needs to be rectified. Bags of grit also need to be accessible, possibly being stored on residents' properties to avoid theft by outsiders.</p> <p>Taking these and other ideas on board, JM will write a draft plan and circulate it with the next issue of Loxhore Lines (end of July), inviting people's comments and asking for volunteers to be points of contact or to help with tractors or four wheel drive vehicles in the event of heavy snowfall. When the final resilience plan is written it will be circulated to all parishioners and published on the website.</p> <p>Ray Comer asked whether sand bags are still available for use in flooding events. Empty bags used to be free from the District Council so the current situation will be ascertained.</p>	JM
5.0	<u>Matters arising from meeting dated 5th July 2018</u>	
5.1	County and District Council News There was none.	
5.2	<p>Rural Alliance</p> <p>The last meeting of the Rural Alliance was very poorly attended and was not quorate (although it is unclear how many PC attendees are required for a quorum). Meetings are held every three months. JM asked if someone could take on the role of representing Loxhore at future Rural Alliance meetings and MB said he would do this, with CD as a back up.</p> <p>The Parish Forum is another group that Parish Councillors can attend. It meets approximately 6 monthly and MB agreed to attend its next meeting. This will be held on Thursday 26th July in the Barum Room at Brynsworthy Environmental Centre, starting at 7 pm.</p>	MB
5.3	<p>Planning Application 65119: Retrospective application for a change of use from additional living accommodation to self-catering accommodation at Rosehill Barn, Hill, Loxhore</p> <p>The Councillors had viewed the application online. Jane Vanstone answered questions about the application and following this the Parish Councillors had no objections to the plans being approved. PG will inform ND Planning of this outcome.</p>	Closed

6.0

RFO's report

The RFO gave his report for period 01.04.18 to 02.07.18

Bank balance at 01.04.18	6134.69
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INCOME

NDC Parish Grant	152.00	
NDC Precept	221.46	
NDC Grant Assistance	2.55	
HMRC VAT Refund	1241.48	
NDC Grant - Broadband	0.00	
DCC - Highway Maintenance Funding	0.00	
NDC - Grant towards WiFi	0.00	
	1617.49	
		7752.18

EXPENDITURE

DALC Subscription	51.19	
Clerk's Expenses	30.00	
Village Hall Maintenance Grant	0.00	
PCC Burial Ground Grant	0.00	
Snow Clearing	0.00	
Highway Maintenance Fund - purchase tools	0.00	
Transparency Code - website etc.	0.00	
J. Barr - Village Lengthsman	0.00	
Lineal Software - broadband	99.99	
	181.18	
Balance at 02.07.18		7571.00

Bank balance	7536.69	
VAT reclaimable	34.31	
	7571.00	

RING-FENCED

P3 fund	1075.71	
Transparency Code Fund	438.36	
Parish Maintenance Fund	509.00	
Highway Maintenance Fund	3589.13	
	5612.20	

Balance available at bank	1924.49	
Plus VAT to be reclaimed	34.31	
Leaves	1958.80	

MB asked about the money given by the Parish Council to the Village Hall and to the Parochial Church Council (see §6.1 of the Minutes for 25th May 2018). PG explained that this money had been passed on from the Parish Grant given by NDC. The Parish Grant can only be claimed for certain purposes - maintenance of burial grounds, maintenance of parks and open spaces, maintenance of village halls and existing loan charges. From 2012/13 to 2017/18 Loxhore was given a Parish Grant of £304, the amount it had been awarded for 2012/13 based on the size of the electorate at that time. Of this, £104 had always been passed to the Village Hall and £200 to the PCC. For 2018/19 the Parish Grant was cut by 50%, down to £152, so payments to the Village Hall and to the Church will be appropriately reduced. The Parish Grant was going to cease altogether after 2018/19 but it now seems that it will continue for 2019/20.

	The only undedicated income for the Parish Council is the precept. The precept for 2017/18 was £600 but for 2018/9 the Parish Councillors decided to reduce this to £442.91, to be paid in two equal instalments by the end of April and September 2018. The application forms for the Parish Grant and Precept usually arrive at the end of November, to be completed in December, and so budgetary decisions need to be made by the Parish Council at the November meeting.	Closed
7.0	<u>Chair's Business</u>	
7.1	<p>Communities Together Fund (CTF) This funding, similar to the TAP funding, has now been launched. The Parish Council would need to identify a project that will benefit both Loxhore and another parish in order to obtain some of the funding. JM asked Parish Councillors to bring ideas to the next meeting. The closing date is 14th March 2019 but until 21st October 2018 only parish council bids will be considered – after this date the fund will be opened to charities and community and voluntary groups. CD asked DS about road maintenance. He is hoping that Chris Comer will fill some potholes and that Jim Barr will clear passing places when he next checks the drains.</p>	All
8.0	<p><u>Next meeting</u> The Chair closed the meeting at 19:03, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting will be held on September 6th 2018 at 18:00 in the Village Hall.</p>	Closed

Minutes approved by Chair..... Date