

LOXHORE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

www.loxhore.org.uk

Minutes

Date: Thursday 1st November 2018

Venue: Loxhore Village Hall

Present: Julie Moir {Chair}
Mike Bowden {Councillor}
Chris Bryars {Councillor and RFO}
Jane Vanstone {Councillor}
Mike Young {Parishioner}
Chris Comer {Parishioner}
Ray Comer {Parishioner}

Minuted by: Priscilla Gellatly {Acting Clerk}

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:00 welcoming all those present and in particular Jane Vanstone. Following the resignation of David Smith, Jane had agreed to be co-opted to act as Parish Councillor on 12th October 2018. She signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form (to be retained by the Acting 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 Acting Clerk). PG will send her details both to Sophie Heaton (Electoral Services Assistant, NDC) and to JM for inclusion on the parish website.

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Carole Delve.
2. Declarations of interest: There were none.
3. All councillors present agreed that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 6th September and 4th October 2018 were true and accurate records of that spoken and the Chair signed accordingly.

4.0	Action points from previous meeting dated 6th September 2018	
4.1	<p>4.2 Treasurer's Report, Broadband (see also 16th November 2017 §6.0, 4th January 2018 §4.5, 16th March §4.3, 25th May §4.3 and 5th July §4.2)</p> <p>As agreed at the previous meeting on 10th September, MB sent Matt Barrow (CDS) a comprehensive and up-to-date list of Loxhore properties, with the request that Mr Barrow should let MB know as soon as possible which properties are covered by Airband Phase 2, which properties are covered by the additional money being made available by CDS and which properties will not be covered.</p> <p>On 19th September MB forwarded to Parish Councillors a letter sent on 13th September from Peter Heaton-Jones (MP for North Devon) to Jeremy Wright (Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport). In this letter Mr Heaton-Jones suggested that Loxhore could be an ideal example of a community that could benefit from a 'local solution to deliver the broadband service which people need'.</p>	

	<p>On 8th October, having had no response from Matt Barrow, MB emailed Keri Denton (Devon CC) and Paula Hewitt (Somerset CC) to ask for their help. However, there was no response from them either so on 17th October MB emailed Rufus Gilbert (DCC Cabinet Member Economy, Enterprise and Skills) asking him to look into the matter.</p> <p>A reply from Matt Barrow was eventually received on 18th October, giving the requested information. It appears that of the 76 properties wanting broadband eleven will get it by 31/12/18 (Phase 2), one by 30/06/19 (Phase 3), forty one by 30/06/20 (Phase 5) and twenty three not at all. This was very disappointing and conflicted with what Matt Barrow had told the Parish Council at the September meeting.</p> <p>On 23rd October MB had a reply from Rufus Gilbert in which he said that there had never been a promise to connect 100% of the premises and that there would be no financial assistance towards using another provider to connect the remaining properties.</p> <p>On 25th October MB replied to Mr Gilbert pointing out that he had not explained why Matt Barrow had told the Parish Council that most Loxhore properties would be connected by the end of 2018. MB asked Mr Gilbert if it would be possible for Loxhore to withdraw from the Airband scheme and use the money to fund its own solution (for example BT), since Connecting Devon and Somerset with its exclusive contract is implementing technology slower than the national average and will only connect 70% of Loxhore premises at some uncertain date in the future. MB is maintaining contact with BT in the hope that BT will reinstate funding for charitable organisations. There was some discussion about the possibility of contacting the media to highlight the problems. MB will liaise with JM about this.</p> <p>On 31st October the Rural Alliance sent an email inviting parishes to complete CDS's online survey about the current broadband provision. However, so far the survey is not working. When it is, PG will forward it to Chris Harrington for his email distribution.</p>	<p>MB</p> <p>JM</p> <p>PG</p>
4.2	<p>4.4 Snow Clearance (see also 25th May §5.2 and 5th July §4.4)</p> <p>JM has produced a map showing the locations of the four parish salt bins. These have all been filled. The map also shows at which properties there is a 25 kg bag of salt. The locations cover the whole parish. The owners of these properties have said they are willing to spread salt locally (1 tablespoon per square metre) and have agreed to store the bags in a location where neighbouring parishioners can access them in order to help with spreading. This map will be displayed on the notice boards and on the website and information will be put in the next issue of Loxhore Lines. A pallet of forty-two 25 kg bags of salt was delivered to the Village Hall and thanks are due to Chris Comer who distributed many of the bags and put the remainder in the big shed at the VH.</p> <p>JM has also produced a list of volunteers who would be willing to help out in the event of heavy snowfall. Parishioners will be able to contact JM to access this help.</p> <p>MB wondered what technology DC Highways use to trigger the salting of major roads and whether this trigger could be sent to Loxhore so that parishioners could salt locally at the correct time. JM will investigate this.</p>	<p>JM</p>
4.3	<p>5.1 County and District Council News Honey Hill</p> <p>A letter supporting NDC's enforcement notice was sent to Mike Tichford (Head of Place to the Planning Committee, NDC) on 9th September. On 21st September an email from Fred Shelton (Senior Enforcement Officer, Strategic Development and Planning, NDC) confirmed that he had instructed legal services to apply to the Court for an injunction in order to secure compliance with the steps required by the enforcement notice 9754.</p>	<p>Closed</p>
5.0	<p><u>Matters arising from meeting dated 1st November 6th September 2018</u></p>	
5.1	<p>County and District Council News</p> <p>There was none.</p>	<p>Closed</p>

5.2	<p>Parish Grant and Precept for 2019/2020</p> <p>There has been no communication yet from NDC regarding next year's Parish Grant and Precept requests but it was felt that as in previous years, budgetary decisions should be made at this November meeting ready for whenever the forms do have to be completed (normally by mid-December).</p> <p>It was decided by NDC in November 2012 that because Loxhore is a small parish (population fewer than 500) it would be entitled to a Parish Grant up to the amount it was awarded in 2012/2013 (£304 – based on £2 for each elector in that year), until 2017/2018, after which it would reduce and then cease. It was reduced to 50% for 2018/2019 but will be reinstated in full for 2019/2020. The Parish Grant can only be used for burial grounds, parish hall, parks and open spaces and loan charges for a commitment approved by NDC. In previous years the Parish Council has asked for £200 for the church burial grounds and £104 for the village hall when applying for the Parish Grant and the requested Precept has been £600.</p> <p>CB will speak to Bev Gould to check that £200 is still needed to maintain the burial ground.</p> <p>After some discussion it was unanimously agreed that an increased Precept of £700 should be requested for 2019/2020 to offset the probable reduction or cessation of the Parish Grant in future years. This will result in a Council Tax Charge for a Band D property of about £8.50. When the forms arrive the Acting Clerk will fill them in accordingly.</p>	PG						
5.3	<p>Election of Vice Chair</p> <p>It was proposed by JM, seconded by CB and unanimously agreed that Mike Bowden should take over the role of Vice Chair following the resignation of David Smith.</p>	Closed						
5.4	<p>Highway Community Enhancement Fund</p> <p>There is still £3589.13 remaining in this fund. As David Smith has left, someone needs to take over his role of overseeing the maintenance of the parish roads and organising working parties. Carole Delve has agreed to do this. Jim Barr and Chris Comer are still happy to continue helping out when needed and both have a key for the shed where the equipment is stored. Chris Comer said that some more tarmac needs to be ordered. This is obtained from Eagle Plant. JM will organise this.</p> <p>MB wondered whether a contractor could be paid to trim the hedges round the parish. CD will be asked to look into this. Landowners are usually responsible for keeping their external boundaries tidy.</p>	JM CD						
5.5	<p>New Bank Account Signatories</p> <p>CB informed councillors that the current signatories for the cheque account are Carole Delve, Mike Matthews and David Smith. CD will remain as a signatory; JM and MB signed the mandates to replace MM and DS. CB will return the mandates to the bank to action these changes.</p>	Closed						
5.6	<p>Acting Clerk's Expenses</p> <p>The Acting Clerk submitted expenses for the period 07.09.18 to 31.10.18</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="236 1823 957 1935"> <tr> <td>Black printer cartridge (receipt supplied)</td> <td>£15.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colour printer cartridge (receipt provided)</td> <td><u>£16.30</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>£31.79</td> </tr> </table> <p>These expenses were agreed and a cheque for £31.79 will be given to her when the bank has processed the new bank signatories.</p>	Black printer cartridge (receipt supplied)	£15.49	Colour printer cartridge (receipt provided)	<u>£16.30</u>	Total	£31.79	Closed
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5.7	<p>Citizens' Advice Donation An email from Citizens' Advice was received on 11th October asking for donations from the Parish Council. It was decided that this request should be sent on to the Village Hall Committee in case they wanted to make a contribution. PG will do this.</p>	Closed																																																															
5.8	<p>Red Phone Box The red phone box by the Methodist Chapel in Lower Loxhore (bought by the Parish Council for £1 in 2008) is in a very poor state of repair. The cast iron sections are severely rusted and the wooden parts are rotten in places. Several years ago the correct red paint was sourced (by Malcolm Prowse) and since then at least two people have offered to repaint it but for various reasons this has never happened. Preparation before repainting would be a major task.</p> <p>Recently a couple from Bideford who were walking past the phone box commented on it to JM and said that Bideford was looking for red phone boxes to go on the quayside. JM has since tried to contact the Bideford regeneration scheme but has had no response. She has also spoken to a company in Nottingham that refurbishes these K6 red phone boxes. An on-site refurbishment would cost £800 and off-site about £2000. Repainting would then probably be needed every year. Refurbished boxes sell for about £2750. The company would buy it in its present condition for £200.</p> <p>JM sent a message via Chris Harrington's email distribution asking for parishioners' views and the majority of those who responded thought the box should be sold rather than repaired. Of the few people who thought it should be kept, nobody volunteered to do the work.</p> <p>Chris and Ray Comer expressed their views at the meeting. They would like to see the box retained and have offered to carry out the work themselves. Any expenses they incur will be repaid from the money in the Highway Community Enhancement Fund. The Parish Councillors were very happy with this solution to the problem.</p>	Closed																																																															
6.0	<p><u>RFO's report</u> The RFO gave his report for period 01.04.18 to 01.11.18</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Bank balance at 01.04.18</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6134.69</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> <u>INCOME</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Parish Grant</td> <td style="text-align: right;">304.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Precept</td> <td style="text-align: right;">442.91</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Grant Assistance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.09</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC VAT Refund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1241.48</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC Grant - Broadband</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>DCC - Highway Maintenance Funding</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NDC - Grant towards WiFi</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>0.00</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1993.48</td> <td style="text-align: right;">8128.17</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> <u>EXPENDITURE</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>DALC Subscription</td> <td style="text-align: right;">59.50</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Clerk's Expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Village Hall Maintenance Grant</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PCC Burial Ground Grant</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Snow Clearing</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Highway Maintenance Fund - purchase tools</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transparency Code - website etc.</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>J. Barr - Village Lengthsman</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lineal Software - broadband</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>155.99</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">215.49</td> <td style="text-align: right;">7912.68</td> </tr> </table>	Bank balance at 01.04.18	6134.69		 <u>INCOME</u>			NDC Parish Grant	304.00		NDC Precept	442.91		NDC Grant Assistance	5.09		HMRC VAT Refund	1241.48		NDC Grant - Broadband	0.00		DCC - Highway Maintenance Funding	0.00		NDC - Grant towards WiFi	<u>0.00</u>			1993.48	8128.17	 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>			DALC Subscription	59.50		Clerk's Expenses	0.00		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	<u>155.99</u>			215.49	7912.68	
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7.1	<p>Halsey Lake Phone Box</p> <p>In September 2016 BT launched a consultation to establish which of the 52 public payphones in North Devon should be removed. BT's criteria for consultation included low usage and the extent of mobile network coverage for normal and emergency use. BT believed that most people now do not view payphones as essential in most circumstances. The phone box at Halsey Lake was on BT's consultation list. At that time Loxhore PC responded (see minutes for November 2016 §5.4) pointing out that the reason the phone was not used much was probably because it was hardly ever in working order. The phone box is on the cycle route, there is no phone in the Village Hall and mobile phone signals are very patchy so a working public phone box was felt to be a necessity. However, two years on, the phone is still not working and several parishioners have suggested that it would be a good idea to have the box removed. JM will contact BT to try to organize its removal.</p> <p>The junction needs signage to make it less ambiguous. Several near misses have occurred because drivers were not sure which side of the phone box they should drive on and JV reported that recently there was a bad collision. Ideally, all traffic should treat the junction as if it was a roundabout, always turning so that the phone box is on the vehicle's right hand side. JM will contact Devon Highways to report the problems and ask for a solution.</p>	JM JM																																				
7.2	<p>Wall at Blackpool Farm</p> <p>At the bottom of the road down from Lower Loxhore towards Blackpool Bridge is an old wall. It is on land owned by Philip Thorne and is apparently the remains of a shed which years ago was used by tramps to sleep in. It is now in a dangerous state of repair, leaning out towards the road and looking as though it could easily fall, with catastrophic consequences for a passing car or pedestrian. JM will write a letter to Mr Thorne pointing out the health and safety issues and asking him to either repair or remove it.</p>	JM																																				
8.0	<p><u>Next meeting</u></p> <p>The Chair closed the meeting at 19:05, thanking everyone for attending. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 3rd January 2019 at 18:00 in the Village Hall.</p>	Closed																																				

Minutes approved by Chair..... Date