

LITCHAM PARISH COUNCIL
M I N U T E S
of
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on

14th May 2007 in the Jubilee Hall, Litcham at 7.30 pm

Present: Mike Oldfield (Chairman)
David Holland
Claire Lawrence
Chris Mitchell
Trevor Carter
Roy Payne
Chris Holland
John Relph (Clerk)
5 members of the public.

1) Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

The following duly elected Councillors completed and signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office forms:

1. Mike Oldfield of Stableside, Mileham Rd, Litcham (Builder)
2. Claire Lawrence of Lime Kiln House, Back Lane, Litcham (Retired teacher)
3. David Holland of Oaklands Barn, Tittleshall Rd, Litcham (Farmer)

2) Election of Chairman.

Mr. Mike Oldfield was unanimously elected to the post of Chairman and completed and signed a Declarations of Acceptance of Office of Chairman of the Council.

3) Apologies: None received.

4) Co-option

The following persons were co-opted onto the council to fill the four vacant Parish Councillor posts.

1. Roy Payne of Russell House, Back Street Litcham. (Architect).
2. Chris Mitchell of Weavers Cottage, Drury Lane, Litcham (Builder).
3. Trevor Carter of Paddock Lodge, Litcham. (Teacher).
4. Christopher Holland of Newling's Farm, Litcham.

All the above duly completed and signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office forms.

5) Minutes

i) Minutes of a meeting the Council held on the 19th of March were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

ii) The Council considered and approved a suggestion from the Clerk that he publish the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting in their draft form rather than wait a year until they were approved at the next Annual Parish Meeting in April 2008. The Clerk will arrange for the minutes to be published in the August edition of the Church and Village, clearly marked as 'Draft Minutes'.

iii) Council further agreed to the publication of the draft minutes of Parish Council meetings on the website two weeks after each meeting and after all Councillors had been given a chance to read them and put forward amendments. If in doubt the Clerk will withhold the minutes.

This matter will be discussed further at the next meeting especially, regarding publication of the minutes in the Church and Village magazine which were sometimes up to three months late.

6) Declarations of Interest:

i) David Holland declared a non-prejudicial personal interest in agenda item 14 ii); Appointment of Trustee for the Litcham Relief in Need Charity.

ii) Declaration of Interests forms were handed out to all Councillors who had not received them from Breckland, for completion and return via the Clerk to Breckland District Council's Standards Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

7) Election of Officers and Committees.

i) Mr. Roy Payne was unanimously elected to the post of Vice-Chairman.

ii) A Planning Committee was set up consisting of;-
Mike Oldfield, (Chairman), Roy Payne, and Christopher Holland.

iii) A Finance Committee was set up consisting of;-
Chris Mitchell, Claire Lawrence and David Holland.

8) Representatives of Council to other bodies.

i) Claire Lawrence was appointed Council representative for the Litcham Primary School.

ii) Claire Lawrence was appointed Council representative for the Jubilee Hall Trust.

iii) David Holland was appointed Council representative to the Litcham Relief in Need Charity.

9) Inspection of Council Assets

i) The Asset Register was inspected and it was noted that the Carpet Bowls equipment needed removing. Clerk will adjust Register and submit it for re-approval at the next meeting.

ii)The deeds to Long Meadow were inspected and it was agreed that the current valuation and rent charged by the Council were realistic and fair.

10) Inspection of Insurance Policies

The Insurance Schedule was inspected by the Council and it was noted that it included £10,000 of Fidelity Insurance and £5,000,000 of Public Liability Insurance. The Council deemed this to be adequate to cover the Council's present activities.

11) To adopt the revised Model Code of Conduct

This item was postponed until the next meeting to give the Clerk time to adjust the document in accordance with recently received advice from the Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils.

12) Standing Orders

The Council resolved to amend paragraph 28 iii) of the Standing Orders to allow members of the public and members of the Council to be present at meetings and speak during public debates on items in which they have a prejudicial interest.

(Clerk's note: as I understand it you still have to leave the room during voting!)

13) Reports

i) Clerk reported that he had spoken to Colin Archer and Roger Warnes regarding the re-routing of the Nar Valley Way through their land. Both landowners had no objection to the idea. The new route would run closer to the course of the river Nar and avoid the footpath running along the busy B1145 Mileham Road.

The Clerk has informed David Mills of NNC Countryside Development who will continue negotiations with the two landowners involved. David plans to arrange a walk to try out the new route during the summer.

ii)Clerk informed the Council that as he and his wife were making plans to move in the near future and recommended that the Council start looking for a new Clerk. Council decided that they would prefer

a Clerk who was resident in the Village and asked the Clerk to advertise locally first.

iii) Highways will shortly be clearing the pavement on the corner of Lexham Road and Pound Lane and will then consider whether the 30mph sign obscured by the hedge of Litcham Hall, needs resiting.

iv) The Clerk reported that installation of 'Zig-zags' outside the Primary School should go ahead in the near future. There are several queries about the configuration of the lines especially with regard to the positioning of the parking bay for the school bus. NNC Highways and the school are currently trying to resolve these issues.

14) Appointments

i) Claire Lawrence was appointed as second Parish Council Nominee to the Jubilee Hall Trust.

ii) The Clerk informed the Council that he could find no record of appointments to the Litcham Relief in Need Charity Trust by the Parish Council since the it's inception in 1994 and had confirmed this verbally with ex-Parish Council Chairman John Mitchell. Tony Green said he was concerned that the current hiatus has meant that rents had not been collected and he was worried that the insurance may not have been paid. Sadie Bailey and Karen Bradley, both co-opted Trustees, agreed and said that they believed their terms as Trustee probably expired last February and due to the current problems reappointments had not been made and urged the council to do all within their power to resolve the situation.

After a lengthy debate over the correctness of the appointments made on the 20th November the Council resolved by a majority of 5 to 1 with 1 abstention to appoint Tony Green of Symons Cottage , Church Street, Litcham as second Parish Council Nominee to the Litcham Relief in Need Charity Trust. Mr. Green duly completed and signed an Acceptance of Office form, a copy of which will be forwarded to the Trust for inclusion in their minute book. (para 14 ii) amended 18/6/7)

15) Open Space License

The Council considered the revised ten year Open Space license for the “Village Green” opposite the Bull Public House from NCC’s Norfolk Property Services Department. Two issues were raised:-

1. Did the signing of the License affect the Council’s Public Liability Insurance cover?
2. Did the license affect the possibility of registering the land as a “Village Green”?

The Clerk will investigate both items and make enquiries with the Open Space Society about registering the land as a “Village Green”.

16) Planning

- i) A letter from an assistant Development Officer, Breckland confirming planning permission is not required for installation of memorial bench on the green opposite the Bull Inn was noted.
- ii) A letter concerning the building work at the “Old Cafe”, now know as ‘The White House’, had been received from a Breckland Planning Enforcement Officer which stated that the current work did not require building consent. The demolished outbuildings in question were within the 115 cubic metre limit allowed for an unlisted building in a conservation area.

Permissions

- iii) Granting of permission for application 3PL/2007/0268, 23 Church St.;-
Erection of a two storey extension.
- iv) Granting of permission for application 3PL/2007/0231, Birch House, Rectory Meadow;- Replacement of storm damaged shed including concrete base and surrounding path.
- v) The withdrawal of application 3PL/2007/0211/F, Norfolk Cottage, Tittleshall Road;-

Demolition of garage & conservatory and erection of 1 & 2 storey extensions, was noted.

Applications:- none received.

17) Financial Business

i) The end of year financial reconciliation for 31st March 2007 was received and approved and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk

ii) The financial reconciliation for the year to date (11th May), was received and approved and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

iii) Clerk distributed a Summary of the Council's accounts for the period April 1st 2006 to March 31st 2007 for approval by the Council at the next meeting.

Receipts:

iv) The receipt £3,937.50p from Breckland, being the first installment of the precept for 2007-8.

v) The Council approved a transfer of £3000 from the current account into the deposit account.

Payments:

vi) Two payments of £60.82 to Eon Electricity for street-lighting power during March and April paid by direct debit.

vii) Of £56.40 to Clerk for annual renewal of web hosting by Vision International, paid by cheque.

viii) Of £190.32p to Norfolk County Services for grounds maintenance of the graveyard, paid by cheque.

ix) Of £118.67 to NCAPTC for Subscription 2007/8 paid by cheque.

x) Of £39 to Litcham Jubilee Hall for the use of hall for meetings, paid by cheque.

xi) The Council considered a request from the Open Space Society for a donation towards their "Saving Commons from Clutter" campaign and decided to donate £25.

18) Correspondence

The following Correspondence received since the last meeting was distributed, considered and actioned were required:-

i) A letter from Litcham Relief in Need Charity regarding the Parish Council Meeting of the 19th March was noted.

ii) Letter from PCC regarding access from Druids Lane in which they state "The PCC see no reason to depart from it's view... on the footpath issue" was noted and this matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

iii) After receiving an e-mail from District Councillor Chris Holland regarding street-lighting and the raised footpath on the Lexham Road the Clerk contacted Highways and they have agreed that the maintenance of this path is their responsibility. It will be inspected shortly and any necessary clearance of undergrowth and maintenance of the surface will be undertaken.

iv) A thank-you letter and update from 'Technobots' was noted.

v) A thank-you letter from Litcham Youth Project was noted.

vi) An invitation from Litcham Primary School for the Parish Council to send a representative to the inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee for Children Centre on 16th May at 6p.m. was considered and Cllr. Claire Lawrence agreed attend the meeting as Parish Council representative. (see also item 8-i).

vii) An update from Litcham Allotments and Leisure Gardeners Association (LALGA) was noted.

viii) NCATPC

- a) A response from Stuart Chaplin re: the use of the Bull Inn Meeting Room for Parish Council meetings was considered. Stuart stated that although it was not strictly illegal to meet in the wing of the Bull set aside for Bed and Breakfast which the Council had been assured was not licensed premises, it was inadvisable for the Council to have its meetings in a building that was perceived as licensed by the general public.
- b) East of England Association of Parish and Town Councils; Newsletter January 2007.
- c) Advance notice of planning seminar 14th June 2007.
- d) Copies of "Norfolk Link" newsletter for May 2007 were distributed.
- e) Introductory Training session 2007 for new Councillors.

ix) Norfolk County Council.

- a) Re: Cattle Grids on the Dunham Road, to facilitate grazing on Litcham Common.
- b) Highways: response to inspection with Clerk on 16th March.
- c) 'At Home-Not Alone' information leaflets.
- d) Norfolk Matters.
- e) Recycling centres – to be put on forward agenda.

x) Audit Commission: Appointment of External Auditor.

xi) East of England Regional Assembly: Notice of Regional Gypsy and Travelers Public Engagement Event.

xii) Clerk and Councils Direct newsletter.

xiii) Breckland

- a) Correspondence regarding the Code of conduct had been actioned by the Clerk. The revised Code will be prepared for approval at the next meeting of the Council.
- b) LDF – Development Choices.

xiv) Standards Board, re: Revised Code of conduct – see 18) xii) a) above.

19) Items for the Next Agenda

i) Adoption of the new Code of Conduct, (Local Authorities Order No.1159)

ii) Adoption of Revised Asset Register.

iii) Arrangements for the publication of Minutes, in particular in the Church and Village magazine.

iv) Access to Graveyard extension from Druids Lane (see item 18) ii above).

v) Approval of Accounts, Internal Auditors Report and completion of Audit form.

vi) Revision of Clerk's Salary.

vii) Dog Fouling Bins on or near the Common.

viii) Registration the Village Green and Open Space issues.

ix) Access to the School Playing Field from Back Lane.

20) Next Meeting

i) Dates for Parish Council Meeting during the rest of 2007 were set as follows:

Monday 18th June

Monday 16th July

August - NO MEETING

Monday 17th September

Monday 15th October

Monday 19th November

December – NO MEETING

All meeting will take place in the Jubilee Hall Church Street,
Litcham and start promptly at 7.30pm

ii) The date and time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday 18th
July in the Jubilee Hall.

Meeting Closed at 10.45 p.m.