

20th April 2017

LONGSTOWE OPEN PARISH MEETING

Thursday 20th April 2017

Longstowe Village Hall 7.15pm

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Barbara Cooper (Chairperson)
Cllr Will Bevan
Cllr Geoff Hemmins
Cllr Ben Holland
Cllr Peter White
Bobbie Coe – Clerk

Also present: Cllr Bridget Smith, Cllr Sebastian Kindersley, Mr Richard Murden.

Tea, coffee and biscuits were served from 7.00pm. The meeting started at 7.15pm.

Minutes of the 2016 **Open Parish Meeting** were available.

Chairman's Report: Cllr B Cooper gave a comprehensive report for the year 2016–2017. A copy will be kept with the Minutes.

A handout of the unaudited accounts for 2016–2017 was presented.

Cllr B Smith and Cllr S Kindersley were thanked for their hard work on behalf of Longstowe and for their presence at most of our meetings.

Richard Murden was thanked for his work on the Public rights of way in the Parish. A copy of his Report will be kept with the Minutes. Andy Church was thanked for his grass-cutting. Michael Murden was thanked for his work cleaning the bus shelters.

The Open Meeting concluded at approximately 8 pm.

Signed by:.....
Chairperson

Date:

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Chairperson's Report

Welcome to the 2017 Annual Parish Open Meeting at which the public may speak without invitation, followed by the normal Parish Council Meeting which again you are most welcome to attend.

Hopefully you have all seen the Agenda which has been on display on our various notice boards throughout the village and on the website. There will be reports from myself, Councillor Sebastian Kindersley (County Councillor) and Councillor Bridget Smith (District Councillor). There will then be an opportunity for Parishioners to ask questions.

- The Parish Councillors are:

William Bevan standing again
Geoff Hemmins standing again
Ben Holland standing again
Peter White standing again
Barbara Cooper standing again
Clerk: Bobbie Coe

I would like to thank Sebastian Kindersley and Bridget Smith for their regular attendance at our monthly parish council meetings and for challenging various issues on behalf of our village. Brigit has helped and continues to help support the Village Hall Committee with their fund raising efforts. This year they have been hugely successful in securing funds in excess of £33,000 towards the refurbishment of the village hall. Sebastian has supported our ongoing village highway issues and continued to advise us with our ongoing campaign to reduce the speed limit on the Old North Road having successfully had the speed limit reduced in 2015. The Parish have been successful in securing grants towards its own speed reduction equipment and new signs for the village and village hall. There are additional funds we will be seeking this year and we would love to hear from parishioners about what they think is needed in the community. Current plans are to seek funds for a defibrillator although the location of this is not yet clear but most likely to be the village hall.

Sebastian and Brigit have continued to keep the Parish up-to-date with the many issues facing the village and the county at large. As a parish we are very lucky to have had their support over the past year along with the other parish council members who give up their time to support the Parish attending monthly and other meetings that enable the Parish Council to keep in touch with the challenges that face small villages like Longstowe.

We cannot however go without also thanking those on the Village Hall Committee and their ongoing fund raising efforts for the refurbishment of the village hall and the Longstowe Sports Committee members who work tirelessly to keep the Longstowe sports field in such great condition. Thanks must be made to Michael Murden who looks after the bus shelters and Andy Church who does the grass cutting.

Thanks must also be extended to Dick Murden who has kindly agreed to continue as the footpaths/rights-of-way warden for the village and to Sally McCall for so ably looking after the production of the *Skylark*. Whilst editorial handover to Clare Rebeck at Beaconsfield House, Longstowe, has occurred, we will all miss Sally's valuable contribution and thank her for her hard work over the last few years.

The Parish Council would also like to express its gratitude to Charlotte Hemmins who took over in 2015 as the internal auditor for the Parish Council and who has kindly agreed to continue to audit the Longstowe Parish Council accounts this year.

Meetings

- Your Council has met each month, except for August, during the past 12 months. At these meetings we have discussed matters raised locally, planning matters referred to us by the District Council, local environmental issues, correspondence received, and our finances. In addition, we have attended a variety of additional meetings, both within the District and more locally, for training, information, or as part of the ongoing Planning process for the area.

Finance

- Our major source of funding is the precept (£5,000 for 2016–2017, £4,500 for 2017–2018) from Cambridge District Council which forms part of the council tax that you pay. The two other main income sources are the grant awarded for speedwatch equipment of £10,000 and a grant of £1,500 for ground maintenance.

- The most significant expense is the Parish Clerk. She is contracted to work 12-16 hours per month for us. In this she must deal with preparing for and recording our monthly meetings, attending meetings on the Parish's behalf, dealing with our finances as our Responsible Financial Officer, together with the mountain of correspondence emanating from Central Government, the County and District Councils and other bodies – much of it in the guise of consultation. I can assure you that our Clerk does significantly more than she claims for and we are very truly grateful. I believe she is fully employed on our behalf. Her pay rate is mandated by a National Agreement covering all council employees and reflects her experience in the role. We are a very lucky village to have Bobbie Coe as our clerk.

Apart from paying our clerk, the majority of your money is spent on insurance, street-lighting, *Skylark* printing costs, maintaining the bus shelters and footpaths, along with fees to useful organisations. A draft summary of income and expenditure for 2016-2017 is available at this meeting and will be available on the website.

Funds / Grants

The application by the Parish for a grant to purchase our own speedwatch equipment in 2016 was successful. Now the lighter mornings and evenings are upon us, the parish is very keen to encourage other local residents to become volunteers to support the delivery of the speed watch scheme which involves using equipment that can monitor the speed of passing traffic. Volunteers record the details, later adding them to a database. Vehicle checks will be undertaken by the police and letters then sent to the registered keepers advising them of the speed and reminding them of why it is a community concern. Speedwatch is not enforcement, it is all about education. It is important to know that speedwatch now forms a part of the response to speeding issues. Before participating in the scheme volunteers need to have attended a 3-hour training event run by the Cambridgeshire road safety partnership. There are multiple events held locally and therefore it is not difficult to access one of the programmes. If you are interested please contact Barbara Cooper bcconfidential@caw.ac.uk, The Dene, Old North Road, Bourn, Tel: 07803 903047 for further details. By working together, the Community Speed Watch enables

Longstowe residents to become actively involved in helping slow the traffic with a view to reducing the excessive speed in Longstowe to within the various 30,40 and 50 mph speed limits

The purpose of the Speedwatch equipment will be:

- To change people's attitudes towards speeding through Longstowe;
- To create a safer environment for the parishioners particularly the elderly and children crossing the Old North Road;
- To empower the parish to work together in partnership with the road safety agencies.

The Parish will continue to campaign to reduce the speed limit through Longstowe.

Communication

Longstowe Parish Council will continue to ensure that it communicates with all its residents in a timely and effective manner, to inform and consult them about matters which affect them. The Parish Council will publicise the services offered by the Council and will endeavour to ensure communication is clear and appropriate. The key stakeholders with which the Parish Council must communicate include: residents; our Clerk; Councillors (Parish, District and County); Village Hall Committee; village organisations; police and other services. We will continue to negotiate with the police and other services re the speed limit in the village.

The parish's communication objectives include

- To improve, plan and shape the future of the parish according to local needs and priorities;
- To improve the quality and delivery of services;
- To use engagement to inform decision making, ensuring decisions meet the needs of the parish;
- To enhance the well-being of the parish;
- To be a stronger, active and more cohesive parish;
- To work towards improving and enhancing the environment and the quality of life for residents.

How this will be achieved:

- Parish Council meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity for members of the parish to engage with Councillors. All meetings include an item for public participation.
- Agendas for all meetings are sent to Parish and District Councillors and posted on the village notice boards and the Parish Council website in advance of each meeting.
- Contact details for all Councillors and the Clerk are available on the Parish Council website.
- Agreed items for inclusion in every issue of the Longstowe village newsletter the *Skylark* (see the website home page for the latest issue) are reported on.
- Development of an extended parish volunteer group to assist with a range of activities including dealing with speedwatch, cleaning road signs, clearing litter

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etc... Discussions with neighbouring villages re supporting the services of cross-village volunteers.

Community involvement

There have been several highlights of the year, including the village fete in the Summer and the dog show. There are several other community events scheduled over the forthcoming months in support of the village hall building appeal.

The latest tranche of funding for the Community Chest grant scheme run by South Cambs is now open. The funding is available to voluntary and community groups, charities and parish councils wishing to improve the quality of life for residents in South Cambridgeshire. Applicants can apply for up to £1,500 for improvements to community facilities, equipment and materials and project start-up costs. For full details about the fund and guidance on eligibility, visit www.scambs.gov.uk/communitychest. Longstowe Parish Council would love to hear from residents about any ideas that might be worthy of an application to support the community.

Planning

Included in the Parish Council monthly meetings are reviews of any planning applications in the parish, assessing their impact on both the immediate neighbourhood and the village in general. Any additional meetings are advertised on the noticeboards and the web pages. Local knowledge and common sense are used to make informed representations to Cambridge District Council as a consultee. The Parish Council is happy to discuss any resident application with individuals before submission for planning approval and for parishioners to attend the meetings where planning issues are discussed.

Web pages

The district council website contains information about the parish. We always welcome your feedback on it and any other parish matters that you feel should be raised.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their continuing support and commitment to ensuring that Longstowe remains a pleasant, safe and outward-looking parish. In particular my appreciation goes to our Clerk Bobbie Coe and William Bevan who has kindly stepped in as chair in my absence during my fourth year as Chairman

Thank you.

Barbara Cooper
Chairperson, Longstowe Parish Council
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Report on Longstowe public rights of way

This is a report of my work on the public rights of way in the Parish, 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017.

The Estate continues to cut paths and David Rolls cuts green lane during the summer season. I made several cuts and trimmed bushes where farm machines cannot go, and along Haley Wood Lane.

I adjusted two kissing gates, and also oiled and adjusted the church gates.

I regularly walk all the rights of way throughout the Parish and can say that everything is in good order, although I sometimes have to replace a way marker.

My expenses for this year are £20 for the use of my car and strimmer on three occasions.

Richard Murden
Rights of Way co-ordinator
April 2017