

16th April 2015

LONGSTOWE OPEN PARISH MEETING

Thursday 16th April 2015

Longstowe Village Hall 7.15pm

MINUTES

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

Also present: Members of the Parish

Tea, coffee and biscuits were served from 6.45pm The meeting started at 7.15pm.

Apologies: Cllr B Smith, Cllr S Kindersley, PCSO John Coppard.

Minutes of the previous **Open Parish Meeting** were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Chairman's Report: Cllr B Cooper gave a comprehensive report for the year 2014–2015. A copy will be kept with the Minutes.

A handout of the unaudited accounts for 2014–2015 was presented.

PCSO John Coppard sent an annual report which was read out by the Clerk. A copy will be kept with the Minutes.

Mr W Slater reported that the badly-fitted drain covers reported to the Parish Council on 15th January 2015 have at last been re-fitted by Anglian Water, following a telephone call from a member of the public.

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.

The Open Meeting concluded at approximately 8 pm.

Signed by:.....
Chairperson

Date:

16th April 2015

Welcome to the 2015 Longstowe Open Parish Meeting. Barbara Cooper Chairman of the Parish Council since May 2013 – 2nd Year.

Tonight's meeting is the Annual Parish Open Meeting at which the public may speak without invitation, followed by the monthly 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 a report from myself followed by an opportunity for Parishioners to ask questions.

- The Parish Councillors remain as:

William Bevan
Geoff Hemmins
Ben Holland
David Rolls
Clerk: Bobbie Coe

Sadly neither of Councillor Sebastien Kindersley or Cllr Brigit Smith can be here this evening, however, I would like to thank them both for their regular attendance at meetings and for challenging issues on behalf of our village. Cllr Brigit Smith has helped enormously in supporting our applications for funding both in seeking funds for our campaign to reduce the speed limit on both the Old North Road and the High Street and more recently to fund additional noticeboards in our village. Cllr Sebastian Kindersley has kept the Parish up to date with the many issues facing the village and provided invaluable advice in tackling the many hot topics. We thank them both for their work and 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 PC to keep in touch with the challenges that face small villages like Longstowe. We cannot however go without thanking those on the village hall committee and their fund raising efforts for a new village hall and the village sports committee members who work tirelessly to keep the sports field in pristine condition despite my horses attempts to sabotage the ground. Mention must be given to thanking Richard and separately Michael Murden who has kindly agreed to continue to maintain the Bus Shelters whilst Richard Murden, has kindly agreed to continue as Rights of Way Warden. It is recognised that we cannot rely on them indefinitely and therefore should be looking to recruit additional volunteers to support them in the future. The Parish Council would also like to express its gratitude to Charlotte Hemmins who took over last year as the internal auditor for the Parish Council and who has kindly agreed to audit the Longstowe Parish Council accounts again 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 Planning process.

Finance

- Our major source of funding is the precept (grant £4000) from Cambridge District Council which forms part of the council tax that you pay. The two other main income sources have been the grants awarded for reducing the speed through the village of £10,000 and £1,000 Community Chest grant for noticeboards. Apart from paying our clerk, the majority of your money is spent on street-lighting, maintaining the bus shelters, playground, fees to useful organisations (such as CAPALC) and our insurance. A draft summary of income and expenditure for 2014-2015 is available at this meeting and will be available on the website.

The Parish Clerk is contracted to work 12-16 hours per month for the Parish. In this time she must deal with preparing for and recording our monthly meetings, 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. Overall, 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. Trust me, she is worthy of more!! We thank her for her massive support of both the Parish Councillors and the Village as a whole.

The application made by the Parish Council for a community chest grant was successful resulting in the funds being made available for the purchase of two additional parish signs. These will enhance communication by allowing the Parish to post up more posters and notices of importance to the community. The Community Chest grant award of £1000 will be used to purchase two noticeboards which will be erected in the Village – one at the Village Hall and one at the other end of the High Street.

Transport

In February the Highways department addressed the agreed speed reduction measures within the village. Whilst this has been welcomed by all, the village continue to be concerned about the impact of the fast moving traffic along the Old North Road. Only last week a car went straight across the junction on the Old North Road crashing into the garden of the property directly opposite the junction. Thankfully no one was hurt on this occasion.

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

Longstowe has continued to see a significant increase in traffic, largely created by the Cambourne development, the road works and continuing accidents on the A14 and A428 which are resulting in drivers seeking an alternative route into and out of Cambridge. This will get worse with the proposed Bourn development and roadworks planned for on the A428.

Longstowe are committed to the Speedwatch programme and two volunteers have been trained alongside the Caxton residents. Subject to equipment availability, it is proposed that the introduction of the speed watch scheme in Longstowe will be implemented in late May.

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 group; village organisations; police and other services. We will continue to negotiate with the police and other services re the speed limit in the village.

Communication with Parishioners includes:

Skylark
Noticeboards
Email
Leaflet drop
Monthly meetings

Sept 14 "Best Practice Guide CAPALC" indicated that there has been an increase nationally in the number of complaints against Parish Council and their inability to communicate clearly, effectively and regularly with residents.

We are very keen to engage more effectively with the community. Whilst we will continue to communicate information to residents, we need to hear about what services you would like to see.

- We need to attract more people to meetings
- We will continue to liaise with the police
- Consider local plans
- Support and encourage local initiatives such as village tidy up scheme, gardening initiatives
- Consultation – complete these on your behalf

So what are we doing?

- 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 village notice board and the Parish Council website.
- A Meeting Report, where relevant, will be sent for inclusion in every issue of the Longstowe Village Newsletter the *Skylark*.
- Development of an extended parish volunteer group to assist with a range of activities including dealing with speed watch, cleaning road signs, clearing litter etc... Discussions with neighbouring villages re supporting the services of a cross village volunteer are ongoing.

Community involvement

There have been several highlights of the year, including the village fete in the Summer, the fundraising concert and the dog show. There are several other

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community events scheduled over the forthcoming months in support of the village hall building appeal including a concert, a recital and the Longstowe horse ride in September.

Planning

Monthly meetings are held to review planning applications in the parish, assessing their impact on both the immediate neighbourhood and the village in general. 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 your application with you before submission for planning approval and for parishioners to attend the meetings. This year we have received and approved two applications.

Planning applications

Planning application – conversion of a kitchen/shower to toilets that are wheelchair accessible.

Planning for a single storey extension to form garden room to Beacon, Old North Road (previous consent – enlarged).

Whilst not a planning application, issues relating to trees in Rushbrook Close have triggered significant communication from Accent Group, including legal communication.

There is a gloomy picture for parishes relying on County Council funds in the future, with more cuts to come.

It has been proposed that we consider forming a consortium of villages to hire a person to do what councils are/would normally do but aren't doing due to budget cuts. Further information will be circulated on this in due course!

Thank you

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Longstowe Parish Council Report 2015

Police report for the last year from 01/04/2014 – 28/03/2015

Total crimes raised for the village = 10

1 x Theft of Heating oil – occurred between 21/03/2015 - 24/03/2015.

Crime has been filed as no suspect has yet been identified.

1 x Burglary in a Dwelling – occurred between 8.20-5.24pm on the 02/04/2015 in the High Street.

1x Theft other – a skip was stolen from the Red House on Old North Road, no suspects identified crime closed.

1 x Theft of motor vehicle – victim was visiting a friend in the village and the vehicle stolen was an Audi Q7 in Grey, between 7pm on the 21/08 and 7am on 22/08/2014.

1 x Burglary other than in a dwelling, Items stolen from disused building on the Old North Road, suspect not identified, crime closed.

5 x Theft from motor vehicle/s – these have occurred at various times/dates over the year at Hayleys Wood on Longstowe Road, crimes reviewed and no suspects identified.

This is an increase of 2 crimes compared to the previous year of 2013–2014

In addition to these crimes we have received 11 further calls for service for Longstowe Village, dealing with a Sudden death / suspicious circumstances / domestics / animal related.

In relation to these please keep reporting anything that looks or seems suspicious to the police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.

We are also running Op-Oaklands which is a Burglary prevention/advice operation whereby officers will spend a number of weeks in a certain village and try and visit every household in the village and offer burglary prevention/home security advice.

Some of you might be thinking what if we are out or at work; we will not be able to speak with the officers? To engage with residents I will be holding several police surgery events in the evenings in your village for anyone who might not be in during the day, this will give you a chance to discuss home security and have a chance to purchase alarms/smart water.

The villages have been listed in order and from the statistical reviewing of crimes for Dwelling and shed burglary across South Cambs. Therefore Longstowe is not due until next year when further dates have yet to be confirmed; we are spending 3 weeks per village across South Cambs so you can imagine the time being spent to ensure all houses in the villages are visited.

Kind regards John Coppard

PCSO for Gamlingay ward, which includes the villages of Longstowe / Arrington / Croydon / Little Gransden and Hatley.