

The Minutes of the meeting of Leeds Parish Council
held in St Nicholas Church, Leeds at 7:30 PM on Tuesday 14th of October 2014.

***Councillors present: China
Fort
Springford***

Also present: Parish Clerk, Mrs Sherrie Babington, KCC Cllr Gary Cooke, MBC Councillor Peter Parvin and Members of the Public.

The meeting was chaired by Parish Cllr Fort.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Govett and Gallihawk and the Police.

2. Declaration of Interests.

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Cllr Fort as a true record, these are seconded by Cllr Springford and agreed by all present.

The Minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the second stage noticed had now been displayed allowing the Parish Council to Co-opt a new Councillor. It was agreed that this would be displayed for a month and the vacancy would be considered at the next meeting.

6. 15 minutes for the Public to speak.

It was reported that the pavements and the bus shelter in the parish were in a poor condition. The Clerk stated she had reported these to Maidstone Borough Council.

A resident reported that there appeared to be lot of cones being left in the parish from contractors working in the area. The Clerk was asked to bring this to the attention of Kent Highways.

Action: Clerk to action.

It was reported that the Landway had not been reinstated following the work undertaken on the B2163. The Clerk informed the meeting that she had been in contact with Kent Highways regarding this matter.

Councillor Cooke stated that he would look into this matter.

Waterside Park Planning Application – A resident spoke regarding the planning application and asked the Parish Council if they would be sending a representative to the planning meeting to speak in opposition of this.

The Chairman stated that Parish Council had objected to this and did intend on sending a representative to speak at the planning hearing.

KCC Councillor Cooke confirmed that Kent County Council had also objected to this application.

It was noted that MP Hugh Robertson had also sent a letter directly to the Chairman of Maidstone Borough Council Planning Committee to state his objections to this application. The Chairman read out this letter to the meeting.

MBC Councillor Peter Parvin was asked if he would attend this meeting to represent his Ward and support the objections raised.

Councillor Parvin stated that he would not be attending the meeting as his view was split and therefore he was going to abstain from making representations. He stated that he had received as many for's as against for the development.

A general discussion took place regarding this planning application.

The Chairman stated that she felt that his Ward should be represented and Councillor Parvin should support the voters and constituent of Leeds.

Councillor Parvin stated that he was not going to give his views or opinions on this application as he felt that this was the fairest action to take regarding this matter.

The Chairman expressed her disappointment at his decision.

KCC Councillor Cooke stated that he was disappointed that the environmental argument did not sway the application. He raised concerns at the two years to be spent quarrying the site and stated that this was not deemed as being a major part of the planning application, even though this involved 50,000 lorry movements over a two year period.

He stated that the first application was currently at Appeal and the second application was marginally different from this. He stated that he found it difficult to understand why MBC were recommending approval for this application when the majority was against it.

He stated that this was an MBC Member decision and he urged as many people to attend the meeting as possible on Thursday as MBC Members needed to be persuaded to defer this application pending clarification of further details or refuse it.

7. KCC Councillors Report.

KCC Councillor Gary Cooke gave his report to the meeting.

He spoke regarding his Members Highway Fund and the proposed reduction to the weight restriction on the B2163 to 7.5 tonnes. He informed members that this has currently been suspended.

He stated that the data was clear and if the restriction of the weight limit along the B2163 had been approved, this would have increased the lorry movements in Willington Street by 30%. He stated that he was in a difficult position as he represented both Leeds and Willington Street.

He informed the meeting that at present there was movement in favour of a relief road to take lorries on a route, yet to be determined, that would link the A20 and relieve traffic in both Willington Street and Leeds.

He spoke regarding the Integrated Transport Strategy for Maidstone and stated that KCC felt that no further housing could take place without a proper relief road. He stated that this would not be a Leeds/Langley bypass but a Leeds/Langley relief road.

He confirmed that KCC were currently working on routes for this.

A general discussion took place regarding this and concerns were raised regarding the increase in the traffic through the Parish in the last two months and the length of time it would take for such a relief road to be constructed.

Councillor Cooke stated that the key to this issue was in enforcement by the police.

CLlr China stated that he felt the residents of Leeds would be disheartened by this position as it was now back to square one, with no reduction in the weight limit and no relief road for the foreseeable future.

Councillor Cooke stated that Langley was now supporting a relief road dependent on the route and funding was available via Central Government and European funding.

Councillor Cooke reported on the Kent County Council budget and the current consultation that was taking place regarding this.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Cooke for his report and he left the meeting.

8. MBC Ward Councillors Report.

Ward Councillor Parvin gave his report to the meeting.

He spoke regarding a new play area strategy and informed members that possible match funding up to £10,000 for new play areas. He stated that this would be confirmed by the Borough Council in the future.

Councillor Parvin reported on the progress of the Local Plan and the housing numbers. He stated that there was a need for this to be approved in the New Year and the final consultation which take place in January 2015.

A general discussion took place regarding the Local Plan and the potential development in the area.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Parvin for his report.

9. Highways Matters.

No further matters were raised.

10. Special Constable Update.

No matters were raised.

11. Police Report.

The Chairman read out a crime report from PCSO Richard Kirby.

She informed the meeting that he was leaving and a new PCSO would be appointed in the near future.

12. Correspondence Report.

The correspondence report was noted by members.

13. Planning Matters.

14/502865/FULL 15 Burgess Hall Drive Leeds Kent ME17 1SH

Single storey pitched roof rear extension.

14/503759/TPO Foley Oast Lower Street Leeds Kent ME17 1RR

TPO number 5002/2014/MS: an application for consent to crown lift up to 5 m above ground level and Crown in by 20% 1no sycamore tree referred to as T1 on the order.

14. Financial Matters.

a. Financial Statement.

The financial statement was circulated to all members. This was proposed by Cllr Fort, seconded by Cllr Springford and agreed by all present.

The cheques for payment were signed by to authorise signatures.

b. 2015/2016 Budget.

It was agreed that the draft budget should be circulated to members for discussion at the next Parish Council meeting.

The Chairman informed the meeting that a request had been received from the Church seeking financial assistance for the repairs to the Church Clock. She stated that a quotation for these repairs had been received at £1066 including VAT.

This was discussed and it was agreed that this would be favourably considered and that it would be placed on the next agenda for formal consideration.

15. Parish Maintenance.

The Clerk was asked to liaise with Chris Brace to see whether he was still happy to carry on undertaking maintenance in the parish.

Action: Clerk to progress

16. Playing Fields and Pavilion.

Cllr China reported that there had been an increase in the rubbish left at the Playing Field following the football matches on Sundays. He stated that litter was being left around the bin in small bags.

This was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Maidstone Borough Council to discuss the options for refuse collection and Cllr China would liaise with the football team regarding the disposal of the rubbish.

Action: Clerk and Cllr China to progress.

Tennis Courts – The quotations for the resurfacing of the tennis courts were discussed and it was agreed that these were too expensive to progress.

It was agreed that a spring clean of the Playing Field should be undertaken in the Spring. It was suggested that this could be a project for the Community Playback Scheme.

Cllr China suggested hiring out the Pavilion for clubs and activities. It was agreed that this should be pursued where possible.

Cllr China spoke regarding the need for a central person in the village to hold the keys for the Parish Council's locks. This was agreed.

The Chairman thanked Cllr China for his work around the Parish.

17. Street Lighting.

Cllr China reported that he had attended a meeting of Hollingbourne Parish Council and their street lighting was discussed. He stated that they had similar problems to Leeds with regards to the financing of the lighting.

Members discussed the street lighting in the parish and Cllr China suggested writing to residents regarding the possibility of turning some of the lights off. It was agreed that this was a matter that should be considered as part of the budget process.

18. Joint Parish Group.

No matters were reported.

19. Remembrance Sunday.

The Chairman reported that the Poppy Wreath had been ordered for the Parish Council.

20. Public Comments.

A resident asked when the Accounts for the Parish Council would be published.

It was confirmed that the audit clearance notice had now been received and that these were available.

The Parish Council was asked whether it held old plans for the Bypass. The Clerk stated that she would look in the archives and bring any information to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to action.

A resident asked why the minutes had been taken off of the Parish Council's Website. The Clerk confirmed that the website had been hacked and therefore these have been removed. She stated that they were due to be uploaded again in the very near future.

21. Urgent Matters.

It was reported that the fence at the allotment had been damaged by a car. It was confirmed that Strutt and Parker would be undertaking repairs to this.

It was reported that the height barrier in the Church Car Park had been damaged. It was agreed that this would be inspected and action taken accordingly.

22. Date of next meeting.

11 November 2014.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting close to the press and public at 8:55 PM.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____