

Minutes of the remote meeting of Fiskerton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 27 April, 2020

Present: Cllrs Canner; Darcel, Harrison, Hill, Walker, Wall, Mrs M Vail (clerk)

There were no members of the public present.

Meeting started at 7.31pm.

- 1) **Open session:** No open session as no members of the public were present.
- 2) **Apologies for absence:** C/Cllr Fleetwood.
- 3) **Declaration of interests:** None declared
- 4) **Chairman's Comments:**

Cllr Darcel called for a 1-minute silence in order to mark the memory of Cllr Wendy Adams. He then spoke a few words; including to remember that he had known Cllr Adams for several years; and that she had been a modest, dedicated person, with a wealth of business and property knowledge; and was good at achieving what she set out to do. She had brought a wealth of experience to the open forum and to the parish council. He concluded by thanking Cllr Adams; and noted that her family were planning a commemorative event to be held one year from now.

5) To note current position regarding co-opting to councillor vacancy:

As a mark of respect, WLDC would not advertise the current vacancy until after Cllr Adams' funeral. Several residents might be interested in applying. **Action: Cllr Darcel, clerk**

It was then noted that several of those present had experienced difficulties in joining this Zoom meeting. The most successful method of joining had been to use the link as provided by the meeting host. Noted that a discount was available for a 1-year membership of Zoom, with a one-off annual payment of £59.95; and it was therefore **RESOLVED** unanimously that this membership should be purchased. **Action: clerk**

6) Resolve to formally ratify en-bloc as follows; Covid 19 Contingency Planning decisions as originally agreed by e-mail before amended legislation allowed for meetings to be held remotely:

- **RESOLVED** to agree that, as public and personal safety is paramount above all parish council business, that the council meets remotely until such time as normal meetings can resume; and that all scheduled public meetings be cancelled
- **RESOLVED** to agree to undertake essential parish council business only to the usual monthly schedule.
- agree to postpone the Annual Parish Meeting (held between 1st March and 1st June); and the Annual Meeting (held in May) should the risk of a public meeting become too high
- To note that, to minimise disruption to service provision and ensure business continuity, as per adopted Financial Regulations, the clerk has delegated powers to authorise expenditure on behalf of the council up to a limit of £1000; in conjunction with the chair and vice chair.
- In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk has delegated powers to authorise expenditure on behalf of the council up to a limit of £1000; and shall report this to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter:
- To keep elected members (via email/telephone calls) and members of the public (via the Parish Council website and notice boards (where/when relevant and practicable) updated.

Noted that the above list should also include to accept the draft notes of the full council meeting held on 17 February 2020 as a true record, and that a minor amendment to these draft notes was required as follows: item 13 – the word 'unanimous' to be amended to read 'majority'. With this amendment, it was **RESOLVED**, with one abstention, to approve the draft notes as a true record. It was also **RESOLVED** unanimously to formally ratify en bloc the Covid 19 Contingency Planning decisions as listed above.

7) To resolve to formally ratify *en-bloc* as follows; the following decisions (*in italics*) as approved by councillors by e-mail from 16th – 31st March 2020 due to the parish council being unable to meet due to Covid 19 and before amended legislation allowed for meetings to be held remotely (*note: an update was given on some decisions: these appear under the relevant items*) :

- *RESOLVED to pay for village planter at a cost of £207.00:*

Following a point raised that the parish council might already have paid for the installation of the planter; it was confirmed that the invoice was for supply and installation of a planter; plus planting of same. Noted that 1) LCC require a map showing proposed location for the planter so as to grant permission; and 2) all planters need looking after by someone.

Suggestions were then made as to possible locations as follows:

- On left hand side entering Fiskerton; between 30mph and 40mph speed signs.
- On Crescent next to existing planters; as LCC permission is not required here.
- Corner of Hall Lane but set right back (ie not on the triangle); although this would only be seen upon exiting the village.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept a proposal to locate the planter on the Crescent in the short term, with a view to moving it to Ferry Road at a later date once LCC permission had been granted. **Action: clerk**

- *RESOLVED to accept contractor's grasscutting contract quote - £2928 + VAT:*

Quote has been accepted.

- *RESOLVED to agree LALC Annual Membership fees of £290.44:*
- *RESOLVED to approve clerk writing to Morris Holmes re concerns about PLIC on Holmfield Estate:*

Cllr Darcel had provided a draft letter for this meeting. **Action: Cllr Darcel and Cllr Wall** to liaise over production of a final letter.

- *RESOLVED to agree that, subject to someone producing such a document, a set of instructions for residents and with a few helpful tips and local telephone numbers to aid residents during Covid 19; can be displayed on the noticeboard and website*
- *RESOLVED to agree proposal to have a simple fact sheet to include in the actual Neighbourhood Plan document; and the full version of Cllr Walker's report as a supplementary document on the website for anyone who wishes to explore the details further.*

Cllr Walker reported that there had been little change since the last update; the master spreadsheet and logged results had been sent to Cllr Darcel who had gone through the written responses and e-mailed them out.

Cllr Wall advised that nothing be put onto the website until the proposed document had been discussed by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, and Parish Council; and approved. Cllr Darcel noted that matters need to be discussed and considered in a full council meeting before anything progresses; and further noted that he had entered all written comments received; with items 5 and 7 having received a vast number of responses. Cllr Harrison suggested that matters need to be moved forward as residents are asking what is happening. A presentation had been planned to be held in the village hall. **Action: Cllr Walker** to recirculate the presentation.

At this point, the meeting recessed to allow a second Zoom session to begin. Cllr Canner left the meeting at this point.

- *RESOLVED to agree that the clerk writes to the enforcement officer regarding containers on the airfield:*

No response had been received. **Action: clerk** to chase.

- *RESOLVED to agree that the clerk writes to the Village Hall Committee to advise them of the removal of the caveat of not on "consecutive days" on traders operating from the village hall car park*
- *RESOLVED to approve suggestion that clerk pursues funding streams for village hall roof*

- *RESOLVED to approve the proposal that the clerk circulates a sample contract of employment:*

The draft contract had been circulated and it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the document as presented. **Action: clerk.** A sample job description had also been circulated, with Cllr Darcel suggesting an addition that the clerk 'maintains the website and updates it where possible.' **Action: Cllr Darcel** to 'tweak' draft job description ahead of next full council meeting.

- *RESOLVED that the clerk orders a 4-month trial version of Sage for £3.65 per month, then after at £12 per month:*

Noted that the clerk was trialling a one-month free version before moving over to the 4-month trial version; and that the Sage package was being run in tandem with the existing accounting system. All bar Cllr Walker were in favour of this package, with Cllr Walker of the opinion that Excel software was sufficient for Council needs.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to formally ratify *en-bloc* the decisions as listed in italics above.

8) Accounts:

A. Accounts reconciliation:

The clerk reported that, as she was still in the process of being set up to access the bank account, she was unable to produce a bank reconciliation report. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the financial report presented; with the following points being noted:

- The entry of £2280 for Lark Energy Grant was thought to be incorrect. Noted that the cost of drain rebuild was for approx. £2280. **Action: clerk** to investigate
- Income from Hodgson Trust was not shown.

B. Approval of accounts for payment:

The clerk read out the following accounts for payment:

- Clerk's wages – March 2020 -----£302.40
- PAYE - March 2020 ----- £75.60
- Clerk's expenses -----£61.13
(Stationery - £15.55; Stamps - £7.32; Signed for postage - £2.26;
Home office expenses 1) March 2020 - £18.00; and 2) April 2020 - £18.00)
- SAGE payroll – March 2020 -----£7.00 + £1.40 VAT (Total £8.40)
- TSO Host – website ----- £17.88 + £3.58 VAT (Total £21.46)
- Stumpbeaver -----£65.00

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve payment of the abovementioned accounts. **Action: clerk.** Noted that, once the clerk has bank account access, and can top up the petty cash monies, her 'sundries' expenses moving forward can be paid via petty cash. A debit card had been approved at the January 2020 meeting, therefore the clerk, once furnished with this, can use it for larger expenses.

9) To review asset register:

Noted that the Ferry Road bus shelter was missing from the asset register; and that three 'written off' items could be removed. With these amendments, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the asset register as a true record. **Action: clerk**

10) Correspondence

A) From resident re. speeding lorries:

Cllr Darcel had written to the company in question about this matter; and lorries had slowed down for a while. Noted that, possibly as a result of Covid 19, there are now fewer lorries.

B) Any response from Morris Homes re PLIC on the 2 open spaces (Homefield estate):

Item considered earlier in the meeting.

C) Any response from WLDC Enforcement Officer re containers on the airfield:

Item considered earlier in the meeting.

11) Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Cllr Walker). Analysis of returns:

Item considered earlier in the meeting

12) To consider Planning group membership is changed to include all members:

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Noted that Cllrs Harrison, Walker, Darcel and Wall currently sit on this group; and that Cllr Hill can't be on it. It was agreed to leave matters as is; and to revisit once a new councillor has been appointed.

13) Update on 1) current website and 2) new LCC website (clerk):

The clerk reported that the current website had temporarily been unavailable due to a delay in the host company receiving payment; but was now up and running again.

Legislation means that websites must be 'accessibility compliant' by mid-September 2020; which an LCC website will be able to offer, free of charge. Cllr Darcel had attended an LCC website training session; but the clerk's training session had been cancelled due to Covid 19. The existing website is considered to be partially compliant – the council needs to establish what is needed to make it fully compliant; also whether there is a cost attached. The council will need to decide in the future whether to transfer over to an LCC website or not. In the meantime, the clerk to circulate details of the accessibility requirements for consideration. **Action: clerk**

14) Church Clock Repairs: (Cllr Wall)

A letter had been received from a resident providing some history and other pertinent information. The parish council has previously paid a £25 per annum service charge.

Action: Cllr Wall to forward letter to all for information – responses to be dealt with via e-mail. No immediate action is required.

15) Update on School/ road sign artwork (Cllr Walker):

No update available for this meeting. Cllr Walker to report back to the next meeting.

16) Update on 30mph repeater signs (Cllr Walker):

Cllr Darcel and Cllr Walker will put these signs up together once the Covid 19 situation allows.

17) Update on Active 30 mph sign (Cllr Walker):

Noted that due to the successive issues of winter flooding closing the road; loss of a working streetlight; and the Covid 19 lockdown; traffic has been vastly reduced; although it had been possible to retrieve a 10-day batch of data. It was agreed to defer putting this sign up until the Covid 19 situation has passed; and noted that volunteers to erect it will be required. Noted that a battery has up to 10 days of life. A permanently fixed sign, powered by either solar panel or wired into mains electricity, would cost approx. £3500 - £4000 plus installation costs; therefore up to £7K should be allowed.

18) Update on funding streams for VH roof and whether to approach architects (clerk):

Reported that many previously available funding streams had either ceased, or were diverting their monies to help fight Covid 19. Cllr Darcel advised that a PWLB fixed rate 25-year loan for £40,000, at a 2.48% interest rate would cost the parish council £1062 per each half year; and have a total overall cost to the council of £54,211. Three quotes will be required; to include refitting the solar panels. Noted the option to retile approx. half the roof.

Action: Cllr Walker

19) LCC Road Repairs Log Update (Cllr Walker):

Reported that Fix My Street has a smartphone app with a GPS locator and option to upload a photo. **Action: Cllr Walker** to register with the app using a specific e-mail address for the purpose. If use of the app proves successful; residents can be encouraged to report matters via this e-mail address, thus allowing the parish council to be aware of reported issues.

20) Reported to LCC: bridge requiring repair on Nelson Road – River Witham footpath:

Noted that the repairs had been completed very quickly.

21) Note that tree stump in village hall car park has been removed: Noted

22) To consider joining LALC Training Scheme at £120 now LALC are beginning to run some courses remotely:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve this expenditure; and to give the clerk permission to join the LALC Training Scheme at such time as LALC begin advertising remotely run courses which councillors/clerk wish to do.

At this point, the meeting recessed to allow a third Zoom session to begin. The clerk was unable to re-join the meeting until later.

23) To approve payment of Langley Solicitors invoice at £815.00 + 163.00 (Total £978)

It was **RESOLVED** to approve this expenditure; noting that this had been a fixed fee, and that the solicitor had actually completed work to the value of £2931.50. Cllr Walker confirmed it was a fixed price contract and that Langleys had said a long time ago that money had expired. Cllr Walker commented about knowing the £800 was extinguished with Langleys "ages ago".

24) FIT meter reading

The clerk had submitted a meter reading.

25) To give initial consideration to ideas to celebrate end of Covid 19 lockdown

Item deferred

26) Setting dates for future meetings; including consideration for more frequent remote meetings during Covid 19 situation; and agreeing any required expenditure on the Zoom package:

The next Zoom remote meeting was set for 7.30pm on 11 May 2020. Cllr Darcel to set it up.

27) To receive observations of the District and County Councillors.

No observations were made.

28) Matters for inclusion on next agenda:

Item deferred

At this point, the clerk was able to re-join the meeting.

29) To resolve to move into Closed Session as the following items contain information of a confidential nature:

A) Clerk's contract of employment:

Item had been considered earlier in the meeting.

B) Mobile phone for clerk to conduct Council business:

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the clerk sign up to a £17 per month, with no upfront costs, mobile phone package. **Action: clerk.** Noted that this would replace the current £18 per month paid to the clerk for home office expenses; and that home printing is to be monitored for two months to allow an accurate reimbursement amount to be set for printing.

C) Accounts programme – update:

The clerk reported that the accounts package seemed fairly intuitive to use; but that it was too early to have inputted sufficient data to produce meaningful reports. In due course; the parish council would need to formally decide whether it wished to retain this accounts package on a permanent basis, or remain with Excel spreadsheets.

D) to review the situation regards the solar panels on the Scout Hut. (Cllr Darcel):

Item deferred to next meeting

E) To consider Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and Good Councillors Guide: Item deferred to next meeting

Meeting ended at 9.31pm.

**The next Zoom remote meeting will take place at 7.30pm on 11th May 2020.
These draft notes will be formally approved as a true record at the next meeting**

**Mrs Michelle Vail
Clerk/RFO to Fiskerton Parish Council**

Dated 01.05.20