

LEICESTER FOREST EAST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 21st June 2023, held in the Reg Neal Room of the Parish Hall, Kings Drive, Leicester Forest East, commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: R. Darlison (Chair) P. Kitchen (Vice-Chair) D. Dawes D. Di Palma
C. Wells M. Bozzoni

District Councillor Coar
Mrs L-A. H. O'Brien – Assistant Clerk to the Council
Mrs H. E. Mann – Clerk to the Parish Council

23.131 To receive apologies for absence

None.

23.132 To receive disclosures of interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct

None.

23.133 To adjourn the meeting to receive questions from Members of the Public

None.

23.134 To note the resignation of one Parish Councillor

Noted.

Clerk to write to ex-Councillor Linnett and thank him for his service as a Parish Councillor.

23.135 To consider co-opting one member of the public onto the Parish Council

Resolution: The Council resolved to elect Mark Bozzoni to the office of Parish Councillor.

Resolution: The Council resolved to discuss agenda item 23.137 'To receive reports from County/District Councillors' at this point of the meeting.

District Councillor Coar gave the following updates:

Proposed New Housing Development off A47

The proposed new development, close to LFE Rugby Club, would mean 800+ houses being built. This application is being discussed again at BDC's Planning Committee meeting next week. However, BDC have previously agreed to defer a decision on the development until after LCC Highways presented to the District Council on how the infrastructure will cope with the additional traffic, bearing in mind there are another 3,000 homes to be built in Lubbethorpe which will put extra pressure on the existing infrastructure. As present, LCC Highways have refused to present but have suggested a report instead. Councillor Coar hopes for a further deferral.

Speed of traffic on Warren Lane, Forest House Lane and Beggars Lane

Several residents have contacted Councillor Coar regarding this issue. Once 1,200 homes are occupied in Lubbethorpe, a new tranche of money will be available for speed reduction measures to be implemented.

Councillor Coar confirmed that 20 mph zones can only be enforced in school zones.

Flies

Things appear to be moving in the right direction in relation to the fly issue.

Car Transporter on A47

Leicestershire Police are getting involved with this issue, as the transporter causes long delays on the A47 when it unloads cars which can back up as far as the Thurlaston junction.

The Chair of the Council thanked Councillor Coar for attending.

District Councillor Coar left the meeting at 7.16pm.

23.136 Appointment of Standing Committees:

(a) Finance and Policies

(b) Parks, Hall, Events and LiFE Magazine

(c) Planning, Trees and Highways

(d) Staffing and Appeals

Resolution: The Council resolved to elect Councillor Darlison as Chair of the Finance Committee and Councillor Kitchen as the Chair of the Finance, Policies and LiFE Committee.

Clerk to:

- Check if the Council's Parks, Planning and Finance Committees are 'standing committees' and therefore, that Council should decide their membership at the annual parish council meeting. Also to add this to the July Council agenda.
- Get new Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office Forms.

23.137 To receive reports from County/District Councillors

Discussed at 23.135 above.

23.138 To discuss Finances:

(a) To approve the order paper for June 2023

Resolution: The Council resolved to approve the June order paper.

(b) To note bank the reconciliations for May 2023

Noted.

(c) To approve year end accounts

A line-by-line review of the accounts was given by the Assistant Clerk including:

Salaries

Overspend of £1100 due to all Council Staff receiving a pay increase of £1925 which was higher than the %increase anticipated when preparing the budget.

Grants

A grant of £4000 was received for the Wildflowers

Insurance

An overspend of £560 this is due to an increase in the insurance premium was more than expected and included in the budget.

Telephone and Broadband

A saving of £732 has been made against the budget.

Course Fees

A saving of £351 as not as many training courses have been attended as anticipated during the year.

Donations Made

There was no budget for Donations. However, three were made on behalf of the Ukulele Band who played at the Picnic in the Park also for D Clements and Mission FB.

Christmas Tree

A saving was made of £424 against the Christmas Tree cost line.

Office Equipment Cost

An underspend of £606 against Office Equipment Costs.

Accounting Package Maintenance

An overspend of £733, this is due to the purchase of Rialtas Cloud as the Rialtas accounts were not being back up daily, Rialtas Cloud also allows Council Staff to work remotely if needed.

LIFE Magazine Expenditure

An underspend of £841 against budget due to the printing of only 2 Life Magazines during the year.

Grants Made

Only 1 grant made to the Library of £4300 resulting in a saving of £700.

Regular Hall Hire

An additional income of £3174 was received during the year.

Occasional Hall Hire

An additional income of £2816 was received during the year.

In total £5990 additional hall hire income was received compared to budget. Hall Hire income during this year is back to pre covid hall hire rental.

Repairs & Maintenance

£12951 overspend includes £10790 for the works either side of the Car Park Gates, this was not budgeted for or Ear Marked during the year.

Electricity

A saving of £1580 compared to budget has been made.

Gas

Due to increase Gas charges there is an overspend of £1944 compared to budget, however a credit of £1378 was received during the year.

Security Services

An overspend of £3197 against budget due the Security Guard beginning to lock the gates each evening this was not budgeted for as it was not known at the time.

Decoration to the Parish Hall

A saving of £1300 has been made against budget as only the Parish Hall was repainted.

Park Maintenance

An overspend has been made of £1670 includes Boulders and Supply of Flowers and Bulbs.

Grass Cutting

An overspend of £1670 as Ground Maintenance costs have been included against this cost line as well as Grass Cutting.

Benches

An overspend of £1749 for the NHS and Jubilee Bench not included in the budget.

War Memorial Benches

An overspend of £5213 for the War Memorial Benches not included in the budget.

Tree and Hedge Maintenance

A saving of £2640 has been made against budget.

Wildflower Garden Footpath and Footpaths

Wildflower Garden Footpath and Footpath costs were taken from the Ear Mark Reserves.

Footpath Maintenance

A saving of £3000 has been made against footpath maintenance.

Play Equipment Maintenance

Overbudget by £7141 due to repair and parts to Boyers Park and the age of the Equipment.

Lamp post Christmas Tree Lights

An underspend of £4500 against budget

Lamp post Inspections

An underspend of £2067 against budget.

A New Noticeboard

A saving of £1100 as a new noticeboard is no longer needed.

Litter Picking

A saving of the £638 due to the litter picking costs being lower than anticipated.

Events Income

Events Income received was £615 for 2 Live and Local events that were held during the year.

Overall, there has been an overspend of £3791 against budget for the whole year. This is a movement from the General Reserve.

Therefore, the General Reserve figure as at 31.03.2023 was £187,872.

To note reserves:

General Reserves - £187872

EMR Parish Hall Development - £60,000

EMR Parks/Play Area Development – £25,005

EMR Canopy - £6,672

EMR Paths around the Parish - £25,005

Clerk to add to Parks agenda: to look into battery storage Battery for solar panels to save some of the energy produced and to look into swapping to electric heating, instead of gas heating.

Resolution: The Council resolved to accept the year end accounts for the financial year 2022-2023.

(d) To note monthly accounts

Noted.

(e) To consider top line budget items

Noted.

(f) To discuss reserves

Noted.

The Assistant Clerk left the meeting at 8.05pm.

(g) To consider any grant applications received after implementation of new grants policy

None received.

(h) To receive instructions for Councillors to approve payments and consider which Councillors will approve payments this month and going forward

Received.

The Council decided to look at which Councillors will approve payments on a month-by-month basis.

(i) To approve the updating of both the HSBC and Unity Bank Mandates to reflect the new Council

Resolution: The Council resolved to update the HSBC and Unity Bank mandates to reflect the new make-up of the Council.

Clerk to update the HSBC and Unity bank Mandates to reflect the new makeup of the Parish Council.

23.139 AGAR:

(a) To approve the annual governance statement (section 1) of the AGAR for the year ended 31.03.2023

Resolution: The Council resolved to approve the annual governance statement (section 1) of the AGAR for the year ended 31.03.2023.

(b) To approve the accounting statements (section 2) of the AGAR for the year ended 31.03.2023

Resolution: The Council resolved to approve the accounting statements (section 2) of the AGAR for the year ended 31.03.2023.

23.140 To note the Internal Audit Report and Annual Internal Audit Report (AIAR)

Noted.

In the internal audit report, the IA recommended:

1. Council note the actual bank balances each month, and
2. that Council publishes the AIAR each year.

Resolution: Council resolved to minute the bank balances each month and to publish the AIAR each year.

Clerk to:

- *Minute the bank balances each month.*
- *Publish the AIAR each year.*

23.141 To decide on dates for notice of public rights (30 days)

Resolution: The Council resolved to set the dates for the notice of public rights as 30th June to 10th August 2023.

23.142 To confirm the minutes from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 17th May 2023 as a true and accurate record

Resolution: The Council approved the minutes from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 17th May 2023 as a true and accurate record.

23.143 To discuss matters arising from those minutes:

(a) To consider whether to apply for a Community Grant from Blaby District Council

Clerk to add 'To consider whether to apply for a Community Grant from Blaby District Council' to July Parks Committee agenda.

(b) To consider a possible August recess

Resolution: The Council resolved not to hold and Committee meetings in August and only to have a Council meeting (on 9th August). The agenda for the Council meeting will be essential items only (e.g. payments) and include essential Committee items if necessary.

Clerk to:

- *Amend website calendar to reflect change of meetings in August.*

- *Prepare August Council agenda for meeting on August 9th (but no Committee agendas) with just the essential items to be put on the agenda.*

23.144 To discuss any matters arising from the Planning and Parks Committee meetings held 6th June 2023:

(a) To consider the recommendation from the Parks Committee to approve the following partly from the litter bin budget heading and partly from general reserves:

(1) install a new litter bin at corner of playing fields (current one is broken),

Resolution: The Council resolved to purchase a green bin where the entire body of the bin can be lifted up to empty it. Also, to have the old dog waste bin removed and this new dual waste bin to be placed in the location of the old dog bin. £288 of this purchase will come from the litter bin budget heading and the remainder will come from general reserves.

Clerk to:

- *Order new green bin to go at corner of playing field and have it installed and dog bin removed.*
- *Inform BDC that the PC is having the dog bin removed at the corner of the playing field and that a new dual waste bin will be placed there.*

(2) removing litter and dog waste bins at junction with Galahad/Lancelot Close (bins worn and decaying and one bin's door won't shut) and replacing with dual waste freestanding bin and

One Councillor stated they believed these two bins had already been removed and replaced with a single, freestanding dual waste bin. If this is the case, it is not known who has done this as they have not been asked to do so by the Clerk.

If an invoice is received for dual waste freestanding bin at junction with Lancelot Close, Clerk to add to Council agenda to approve this spend from general reserves.

(3) remove the dog bin on the Somerfield Way car park as there is already a dual waste bin at that point and neither bin gets used often.

Resolution: The Council resolved to pay to have the dog bin removed at the Somerfield Way car park due to lack of use and there already being a dual waste litter bin in the same location.

Clerk to:

- *Add to Parks Committee agenda to add a larger bin to go near to the MUGA.*
- *See how much a bigger bin would cost (to be placed near to MUGA).*
- *Arrange for dog bin at Somerfield Way car park to be removed.*

(b) To consider how to more widely publicise Parish Council meetings

Clerk to ask fellow Clerks for ideas on how to get people interested in parish Council meetings etc.

(c) To consider works to the boundary of Forest East Park to stop bushes and vegetation encroaching onto a resident's property

The Chair of the Council attempted to visit the property but the residents were not in.

Clerk to pass email address of resident to Chair of the Council.

(d) To consider requests made by Epworth Football Club:

- (1) To consider installing a trophy cabinet to display Epworth's trophies,**
- (2) To consider if the grass can be cut shorter,**
- (3) To ask if the Parish Council would consider having a container installed and positioned in the top left of the field to hold football equipment,**
- (4) To consider allowing Epworth to apply for grass pitch improvement funding,**
- (5) To consider granting Epworth Football Club a five-year long lease**

Resolution: The Council resolved to reply with 'no' to all of Epworth's requests above.

(e) To consider issues raised by the Parks Committee regarding Epworth Football Club:

(1) Whether the changing room has been cleared,

The Clerk cleared out the changing room today.

(2) To consider issue of current line marking machine marking the park's paths and possible installing a tap in the garage to help alleviate the problem,

The Council decided not to install a tap in the garage.

(3) To consider the legalities and implications associated with female football players and the Parish Council's duties in that respect

The Council has a safeguarding Policy but these issues are the responsibility of the club using the facilities at the parish Hall/playing field (i.e. Epworth) not the Parish Council in this instance.

23.145 To receive Planning Applications/Decisions/Enforcement cases received after Planning meeting was held (a) 23/0248/NMAT – 27 Lodge Close – non-material amendment to application 22/0212/HH to remove side extension, increase rear extension and reposition rear fenestration

No Comment.

23.146 To review Policies:

(a) Safeguarding Children Policy and (b) Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Resolution: The Council resolved to replace the Safeguarding Children Policy and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policies with BDC's combined Safeguarding Policy.

Clerk to update the Safeguarding Policies on the website and also update the Plan of Work and List of Policies to Review document.

(c) Data Breach Policy

Resolution: The Council resolved to make no amendments to the Data Breach Policy.

Clerk to update the review date on the Data Breach Policy.

(d) Subject Access Request Policy

Resolution: The Council resolved to make no amendments to the Subject Access Request Policy.

Clerk to update the review date on the Subject Access Request Policy.

23.147 To consider returning a percentage of a hall hirer's booking fee after a complaint was received

Resolution: The Council resolved that Epworth Football Club are not allowed to use the bottom pitch from now on with immediate effect. This includes training and matches.

Resolution: The Council resolved to refund £100 (half of the total hire fee) to a hirer who complained to the Council after their hall hire was disrupted by no parking availability and difficulties placing their bouncy castle.

Clerk to:

- *Ensure £100 is refunded to hall hirer who had issues with parking and bouncy castle location at their recent party at the Parish Hall.*
- *Write to Epworth Football Club and let them know of the Council's' decisions at this meeting.*

23.148 To consider quote for updating the Roll of Honour Board and spending from general reserves on this amount

Resolution: The Council resolved to accept Etchells quote to update the Roll of Honour Board with the new Chairman's details at a cost of £ 178.96.

Clerk to:

- *Accept Etchells quote to update the Roll of Honour Board with the new Chairman's details at a cost of £178.96.*
- *Add Etchells quotes to quotation file.*

23.149 To consider charitable donations:

(a) To consider donating £75 each to Sue Young Cancer Support, Dove Cottage Hospice and Living Without Abuse as a thank you for QUO Orchestra performing for free at the Picnic in the Park event

These donations are to come out of the 'Parish Activities' budget heading.

(b) To consider donating £50 to Neighbourhood Watch for crime prevention items

Resolution: The Council decided to donate £50.00 to the local Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator to purchase crime prevention kits only if he agrees to have a stall at Picnic in the Park and brings some of these kits with him for residents.

Clerk to inform local Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator that the Council will give the organisation £50.00 to purchase crime prevention kits only if he agrees to have a stall at Picnic in the Park and brings some of these kits with him for residents.

23.150 To consider holding a Councillors' Surgery at the Parish Hall one Sunday

Clerk to keep 'To consider holding a Councillors' Surgery at the Parish Hall one Sunday' on agenda.

23.151 Plan of Work

Noted.

23.152 Clerk's report

Tommy Planters

Two Councillors agreed to fill the Tommy planters with compost and place in the correct location early next week.

Flies

Clerk to add the Environment Agency Phone number to the Parish Council's website and Facebook pages for residents to contact and report the issue with flies.

Live and Local

Clerk to contact Live and Local and explain Council will pay the full amount as there are currently no plans to use Live and Local in future.

Library Grant

The library emailed to thank the Council for the grant, works have been completed. They want to put up a plaque to say that the Parish Council funded the works.

Canopy

Canopy due to be installed next Monday.

23.153 Councillors' forum

None.

23.154 Delegates reports

None.

23.155 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 19th July at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 9.24pm.