

LEICESTER FOREST EAST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd October 2019 in the Reg Neal Meeting Room, Parish Hall, Kings Drive, Leicester Forest East, commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: P. Linnett – Chairman P. Kitchen – Vice-Chairman I. Deacon
C. Lawrence P. Fox

Mrs H E Mann – Clerk to the Parish Council

19.155. To receive apologies for absence

District Councillors Coar and Clements sent their apologies which the Council accepted.

19.156. To receive disclosures of interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct

None.

19.157. To adjourn the meeting to receive questions from members of the public, including representatives from Leicester Forest East's Community Library

Three representatives from Leicester Forest East Community Library attended the meeting. They were Georgina Robson (trustee), Wendy Walker (volunteer) and Cath Clark (treasurer). Ms Robson handed each Councillor a report detailing the history and financial position of the library.

Report

In summary, the report explained that Leicestershire County Council will gradually withdraw funding to the Library over the next few years until April 2022, when funding will stop. The grant figure for 2019/20 is £8,108. In 2020/21 it will be reduced to £5,664 and in 2021/22, it will be just £3,220.

The annual running costs of the Library are circa £14,500. However, with predicted fundraising activities (quizzes etc.), the shortfall between income and expenditure is predicted to be £3,500. The Library is, therefore, asking the Parish Council for an annual grant, towards running costs, of that amount.

Response to report

Councillor Linnett explained that the Parish Council very much values the Library; Councillor Fox helped to set up the Library to be run by volunteers.

Councillor Kitchen asked who owned the Library building itself and Ms Robson explained that Leicestershire County Council own the building itself but the library trustees and volunteers are responsible for its upkeep.

Councillor Fox asked if the library could provide accounts in order to justify any increase in the precept to the residents to Leicester Forest East. The Library volunteers stated that they would pass the latest version to the Clerk.

Councillor Deacon asked whether the shortfall between the income and expenditure is likely to increase. The volunteers explained that due to shopping around for good deals on utility bills and a predicted increase in fundraising amounts, there should not be an increase.

Ms Clark stated that she had seen grants mentioned in the parish Council's budget and asked whether the Parish Council can give grants. The Chairman explained that grants were a new thing in the Council's budget and, as yet, no grants had been given. Councillors Deacon and Lawrence explained that this is because no grants policy was yet in place. Councillor Fox explained that grants will be discussed at next week's Finance Committee Meeting. The Parish Council will then need to discuss, at the first Finance Committee Meeting of next year when the budget is set, the possibility of an annual grant to the Library.

Ms Clark asked whether the grant would be from s. 137 money. Councillor Fox explained that it would not.

Ms Robson asked whether, with just two years of Leicestershire County Council funding left, the Parish Council would allow the library to close. Councillor Fox stated that the Parish Council is, unfortunately, not authorised to take on the running of the Library, it can only give financial contributions.

Ms Robson said that the Library accounts would be provided to the Clerk as soon as possible. Ms Walker asked whether it was just the last set of audited accounts that the Parish Council would need to see, the Council confirmed it was.

19.158. To receive reports from County/District Councillors

Councillor Coar had emailed the Clerk in advance of the meeting, with to updates.

Firstly, there is now a right hand turn arrow at the junction of Beggars Lane and the A47. This appears to be a great improvement, having a positive impact on traffic flow at non peak times.

Secondly, Tesco hope to open their new store on Hinckley Road within the next few months. They are awaiting junction improvements to be carried out by Leicestershire County Council, which were part of the planning application restrictions.

19.159. To approve the order paper for October 2019, Bank Reconciliation and business banking form completion

Councillor Lawrence proposed accepting the order paper and Councillor Kitchen seconded. Carried.

Councillors Kitchen and Fox agreed to authorise the Unity online bank payments.

19.160. To receive the monthly newsletter from Leicestershire Police

The Clerk emailed the newsletter to the Councillors in advance of the meeting. The Council asked the Clerk to contact PCSO Duane Wright and ask if he will attend a Parish Council meeting to put some of the statistics into context. *Clerk to action.*

19.161. To confirm the minutes from the council meeting held on 25th September 2019 are a true record

Councillor Fox proposed accepting the full council and closed session minutes, Councillor Kitchen seconded. Carried.

19.162. To discuss matters arising from those minutes:

(a) annual action list update

Councillor Deacon advised to accept the utility quote the Clerk had shown him prior to the meeting. *Clerk to action.*

The Chairman asked the Clerk to add the purchase of Remembrance Day Poppies and Wreath to the action list for April 2020. Councillor Lawrence asked the Clerk to add the email from the Royal British Legion fundraiser (in lieu of an invoice) to the invoice file. *Clerk to action.*

The Clerk informed the Council of the following:

1. Quotes are currently being obtained for clearing the ditch in Forest East Park.
2. In November the gutters of the Parish Hall will be cleared out.
3. Correspondence with David Wilson regarding the Ransom Strip is ongoing.
4. The fixed electrical wiring in the Parish Hall will be inspected in November.

The Clerk needs to action the following action points:

1. Annual maintenance check of the alarm.
2. Annual inspection of fire equipment and fire alarm system
3. The Boiler in the Parish Hall needs servicing in December. *Clerk to action.*

(b) ransom strip update

The Council asked the Clerk to add this item to the next full Council agenda. *Clerk to action.*

(c) litter-pick update

The Council confirmed that the litter-pick will take place from the Parish Hall at 10am on Saturday 2nd November. Councillors Kitchen and Fox stated that they would not be able to attend. *Clerk to add the event to the Parish Council's website, Facebook page, Noticeboards and to contact the resident who emailed their interest in litter-picks.*

(d) Councillors surgeries update

The Clerk confirmed that she had booked the Library from 10am on Saturday 7th December for the first of the Councillors Surgeries. The Parish Council hope to hold the second surgery on the first Saturday in February at St. Andrew's Church. Councillor Kitchen offered to liaise with the Church regarding this second surgery. *Clerk to publicise the Councillors surgeries on the Noticeboards, Website and Facebook page.*

(e) Budget 2019

The Council asked the Clerk to add this item to the next Finance Committee Meeting Agenda. *Clerk to action.*

(f) remembrance event

Councillor Kitchen confirmed that the Remembrance Day Service will be held on Sunday 10th November at 10.30am.

19.163. To discuss Imprest (Petty Cash)

The Council unanimously agreed to change from using HSBC for petty cash to using Unity Trust Bank due to their procedures being far easier. This will take place once all necessary documentation is completed and after the last Imprest cheque is cashed with HSBC.

19.164. To discuss the vandalism to the Noticeboard on Hinckley Road (opposite Table Table)

The Council unanimously agreed that the clerk should ask Forest Park Table Table if they would allow the notice board to be relocated to the grass area at the front of their restaurant. *Clerk to action.*

19.165. To discuss the Highways and Transport satisfaction Survey

The Council discussed and unanimously agreed each answer. *Clerk to complete the form online on behalf of the Parish Council.*

19.166. To authorise paying for the Neighbourhood Development Plan to be completed

Councillor Fox agreed to aid the Clerk to find all of the necessary documentation for completion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Councillor Fox proposed paying for 'Your Locale' from the contingency fund and Councillor Kitchen seconded. Carried.

Clerk to action Neighbourhood Development Plan Completion.

19.167. To discuss the allocation of reserves

The Council asked the Clerk to add this to the next Full Council Meeting agenda. *Clerk to action.*

19.168. To discuss the Christmas Lights Switch on

The Christmas Lights are due to be switched on at 5.00pm on Thursday 28th November.

19.169. Clerk's report

The Clerk updated the Council on the following matters:

1. Plans for there to be a Unitary Council for Leicestershire have not received support so far.
2. The Premises Officer would like to hire the Café Area of the Parish Hall early next year. The Council unanimously agreed not to charge her for this event.
3. Christmas Tree recycling points have been reduced this year with the ones at Countesthorpe (Co-Op Supermarket car park), Enderby (Leisure Centre car park), Glenfield (Stamford Street car park), Huncote (The Pavilion car park) and Narborough (Narborough Park car park, Desford Road) still being available.
4. After renewing the BT contract (after securing a discount), six months free subscription has been offered to employees by BT. The Council unanimously agreed that the Clerk and premises Officer can make use of the offer.
5. The national average local parish and town council Council Tax rate (Band D) for 2019/20 is £67.18.
6. The ladies toilet still has a leak which is being investigated.
7. An item has been stolen out of one of the Bowls Club cupboards. The Council stated that if any hirer would like to add a lock to their cupboard, they would need to fund it themselves.
8. After Clerks Training it has become apparent that items of expenditure incurred by the Clerk in emergencies may need approval in full council minutes. *Clerk to action.*
9. The Clerk is trialling opening the Parish office between 10am and 12 noon on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. *Clerk to add this to the December Full Council Meeting Agenda for review.*
10. Additionally, opening the door is taking up a lot of the Clerk's time. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to check the hire agreements to see if it is the hirer's responsibility to open the door and to report back at the end of the year. They also asked her to report any other ideas she may have in this regard either at the end of the year or beforehand. *Clerk to add this to the December Full Council Meeting Agenda for review.*

19.170. Councillors forum

Councillor Kitchen said he had received a letter from a resident, regarding traffic, which requires a response. *Clerk to action.*

Councillor Fox asked that the Clerk take photos of all Councillors at the next Full Council Meeting to update the protoboard in the entrance to the Parish Hall, these photos should also be labelled to show the names of the councillors and members of staff. *Clerk to action.*

19.171. Delegates reports

Councillor Fox stated that he and Councillor Di Palma had attended the Lubbesthorpe Liaison Meeting, along with two Councillors from Braunstone Town Council. The outcome of the meeting was the Councillors from both Leicester Forest East Parish and Braunstone Town would write to Blaby District Council to raise the following issues:

1. Housing numbers, building rates and affordable housing rates,
2. Timescale and details of Proposed amendments to the road and crossing points close to Murby's way in Thorpe Astley.
3. Community Speed Watch (almost every car coming over the M1 bridge was speeding)
4. The Arriva Click service being more like a taxi service.

The Lubbesthorpe liaison meeting will now take place periodically.

Councillor Linnett had recently attended a patient participation group at the Doctors Surgery. He reported that from 28th October the old reception area will be moved to the new area, temporarily, whilst a new roof is put on the building. There is also added security at the surgery as insulation materials have been stolen from the site.

19.172. To set the date of the next meeting

Wednesday 20th November 2019 at 7.00pm.

Meeting Closed at 9pm.