

21 September 2023 - Minutes

Draft Minutes for the meeting of the Parish Council 7.00 Thursday 21st September 2023

Signed: Zoe J North
Council

Acting Clerk to the
Date: September 21st, 2023

Council Members in Attendance: Geoffrey Dorrity [*Chair*]; Zoe J North [*Vice Chair and Acting Clerk*]; Jenny Taylor [*Councillor*]; Andrew Watkins [*Councillor*]

Residents in attendance: 5

Welcome Statement from the Chair *Open Forum*

Enquiry regarding Priority Passing on Brandon Road Bridges: This matter requires referral to the Highways Department, and the Chair will direct it to Cllr Maughan.

Request for Enhanced Accessibility of Bus Services in the Village: Cllr Milnes advocated the utilization of the 'Call Connect' service for village commuters. This service allows villagers to pre-book their transportation needs for commuting purposes. She has noted concerns regarding the availability of funding and the sustainability of bus services in rural areas. Another resident recommended 'Call Connect' as a dependable service and has frequently observed residents from neighbouring villages utilizing it. The Chair will undertake follow-up discussions with the Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and Cllr Maughan to explore potential avenues for improving transportation links in our villages.

UPDATE ON LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL [*Cllr Alexder Maughan*]

- **Apologies for Absence:** The Chair presented apologies for the absence of Councillor A Maughan. It was noted that the Chair would provide the report on behalf of Councillor Maughan. See appendix 1

In addition

- **Doddington Lane and Clensey Lane Update:** An update on the progress of Doddington Lane and Clensey Lane projects was provided, indicating a delay in their execution. However, it was mentioned that the scope of work is anticipated to be expanded. In response to a resident's query about plans for Fenton Road, due to potholes and uneven surfaces, Cllr Milnes recommended using the Fix My Street platform to report such issues.
- **Footpath to Claypole Update:** Cllr Maughan had sent in application to funding agency supporting additional funding to speed up completion of kissing gates at all style points remaining. He is awaiting the outcome.

UPDATE ON SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL [*From Councillor Penny Milnes*]

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- **Local Plan:** The review of the district's Local Plan is delayed due to government development guidelines. Consultation is expected soon. Stubton's planning policies are unlikely to change, and the Parish Council will be consulted in due course.
- **Traveller Site Allocation:** The allocation of traveller sites has also been delayed due to a pandemic backlog. A needs assessment is completed, but no sites have been presented to the council. This does not meet the statutory requirement for traveller provisions. Landowners have not come forward with allocated sites.
- **13th October:** The Chair has been invited to join the leader of SKDC and Cllr Milnes for a walkabout in the village on Oct 13th.
- **Prosperity Fund:** Reminder about the Prosperity Fund for rural areas.
- **SKDC Buying Homes:** SKDC is purchasing homes for refugees (Ukrainians and Afghans) with government funding, and these properties will remain in council housing stock after the need for refugee accommodation passes.
- **Solar Farm Applications:** There is an increase in solar farm applications across SKDC, sparking debates on energy and food security.
- **New Committee for Guidelines and Conduct:** A new standards committee is established for LGA Guidelines, Codes of Conduct, and Complaints against councillors (incl. Parish Councillors) to enhance professional and respectful behaviour.
- **Parish Online:** Parish Online is an online forum available for useful information, and further details can be obtained by contacting LALC (Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils).

Opening of Formal Parish Council Meeting

Chairperson welcomed Cllr North back to the PC meeting following her recent family bereavement..

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Teri England due to illness.

2.0 Conflicts: No conflicts of interest declared.

2.1 Disclosures of Interest: No disclosures of interest declared.

3.0 Minutes of Last Meetings

Motion from the chair: To adopt the draft minutes as a true record of the previous extraordinary meeting of 31 July 2023 – Seconded by Cllr Jenny Taylor. Agreed.

4.0 Clerk's report on any matters outstanding: No report was made, as there are currently no matters outstanding.

5.0 Finance

5.1 Finance Report

Uncontested Election Cost: A charge of £74.72 was incurred since the previous meeting for the uncontested election.

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Plus agreed commitments

- **Refurbishment of the Flagpole:** replacement of finial and halyard
- **Voluntary Donation for Memorial Tree:** The Parish Council has made a voluntary donation of £50 for the acquisition of a memorial tree in honour of Pip North.
- **£300 from the best kept village award:** will go towards the community gardens and green spaces.

Chair put forward the motion: That the finance report be accepted – this was seconded by Cllr Watkins

5.2 Budget for 23/24 was discussed in item 6.

6.0 Clerking arrangements (deferred from previous meeting)

The Chair introduced a motion to initiate the recruitment of a Parish Clerk at the earliest opportunity.

Councillors inquired about the estimated cost of employing a clerk, which was calculated at approximately £1,000 per annum based on an estimated workload of 65 hours per year at a rate of £12.06 per hour, equivalent to an average of 1.5 hours per week. It was noted that this rate might need to increase by £1 per hour to account for inflation and wage adjustments in accordance with the recommended national agreement.

Regarding insurance and pension contributions, Councillor Watkins sought clarification. It was explained that insurance coverage generally sufficed, and there was no requirement to pay into pension plans.

Councillor Taylor emphasized that the precept would need to increase in the upcoming financial year to accommodate the appointment of a paid clerk, a sentiment concurred with by the Chair. It was further acknowledged that precept increases would be necessary to cover future salary increases for the clerk year on year, to maintain the budget.

The Chair then proposed a motion to advertise the vacancy for a paid clerk on various platforms, including the notice board, website, parish magazine, and the local newspaper. It was also noted that the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) would assist with the advertisement. This motion was seconded by Councillor Jenny Taylor and Vice Chair North.

Councillor Watkins proposed a formal vote, which resulted in unanimous agreement among all present council members to proceed with the recruitment of a paid clerk.

7.0 Upkeep of public planting areas

A special thanks to the community for reinvigorating the village green areas.

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The Chair presented a motion regarding the implementation of a planting scheme proposed by the Gardening Club: aimed at guiding the enhancement of existing planted areas within our community. It was suggested that an allocation of £150 be earmarked for the acquisition of bulbs to adorn the entrances to our villages. Specifically, Councillor Taylor recommended the planting of daffodils and tulips at these entrances. During discussions, a concerned resident raised the issue of certain areas near the gates being overgrown with grass, which often obscured the visibility of the planted flora. In response to resident inquiries, considerations were made regarding the cost of the bulbs and the exploration of alternative suppliers.

Subsequently, Councillor Watkins introduced an amendment to the motion, proposing a maximum expenditure limit of £150 for the purchase of bulbs. This proposed amendment was duly seconded by Vice Chair North

8.00 Update on residents' priorities

Progress regarding the potential acquisition and installation of portable electronic speed signs: Concerning the recent update on speeding and associated funding matters, the Chair has been in communication with the officer concerned with undertaking the survey. He expressed his apologies for the delay in carrying out the surveys, acknowledging that the requests should ideally have been fulfilled by this time. However, due to budget constraints and the unavailability of a vehicle, the surveys were postponed. He emphasized that Stubton is a priority on his list, and he anticipates conducting the surveys within the next 2 to 4 weeks. It is essential to underscore that the speed survey is a prerequisite for accessing funding from the community fund.

In consideration of the motion concerning the speeding survey, two options were presented:

Option a) Conduct surveys on all four roads entering and exiting Stubton.

Option b) Focus surveys solely on Brandon Road and Claypole Road.

Councillor Taylor argued in favour of concentrating efforts on areas such as Brandon and Claypole Roads, which are more likely to experience speeding. Conversely, Councillor Watkins believed that surveying all four roads would bolster the credibility of the survey results. The Chair emphasized that if the survey indeed identifies instances of speeding, there is the possibility of securing a grant to fund the installation of speed signs within the village.

During this discussion, a resident pointed out that neighbouring villages had only surveyed their main roads and subsequently received grants to install speed signs. Cllr Milnes concurred with this. The magnitude of the speeding issue detected could significantly impact the allocation of resources and grants to the villages.

Cost-related inquiries were raised by Councillor Watkins, to which the Chair responded that no specific cost estimations were available, as the last survey had been conducted in 2010. Councillor Watkins contended that if there were no associated costs, it would be prudent to conduct surveys on all four roads. He

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proposed that surveys should indeed be conducted on all four roads, but no response from the rest of the council was forthcoming.

The Chair will make inquiries about the feasibility of surveying all four roads. If it proves viable, the council will proceed with surveys on all four roads. However, if this is not feasible, the survey will concentrate on the main road through the village.

Enhancement of the existing footpath stretching from Fenton Road to Claypole: A funding proposal from the LCC officer has been officially submitted to secure resources for the installation of the remaining kissing gates needed to finalize the footpath's development. This strategic action is anticipated to expedite the implementation of the kissing gates, surpassing the original timeline for their installation.

Advancing the Design and Implementation of a Village Sign in Conjunction with Coronation Commemoration: To date, no substantial headway has been achieved in the endeavour to conceptualize and execute a village sign that harmonizes with the forthcoming coronation commemoration. Considering this, the Chair has proposed that Councillor Watkins assume responsibility for progressing this initiative. Specifically, Councillor Watkins was asked to present a comprehensive proposal encompassing both cost estimates and design concepts at the upcoming council meeting. Councillor Watkins initiated a discussion regarding the project's scope. He suggested the exploration of an information table, akin to the one situated in Dry Doddington. The Chair recalled that the previous survey results had indicated a preference for a carved metal sign as the preferred option.

To facilitate further deliberation on this matter, the Vice Chair will circulate pertinent information pertaining to costings and design proposals among the council members.**Top of Form****Bottom of Form**

9) AOB

Tree Planting in Memory of Pip North: A motion has been proposed and agreed by all for the council to contribute £50 toward the planting of a memorial oak tree in honour of Pip North, an area of space has been kindly donated by a resident of the village and suitably located near the entrance of Philip North's Land.

Parking Issue on Claypole Road: A resident has requested that a letter be sent to residents on Claypole Road, urging them to refrain from parking on the pathway areas. This is to address safety concerns, as obstructing vehicles have necessitated pedestrians walking on the road. Cllr Watkins will contact the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to request assistance in encouraging more considerate parking.

Hedge Height Reduction on Mayglen: A resident has expressed concerns regarding the height of hedges obstructing the visibility of oncoming vehicles and that this was a condition of planning permission. Cllr Milnes will liaise with enforcement officers to inquire about hedge height regulations and their potential impact on visibility.

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10) Date and time of next meeting as agreed previously

Wednesday 15th November 2023 at 7.00 in the Village Hall.

Appendix 1

CLLR ALEXANDER MAUGHAN LINCOLNSHIRE CC UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2023

County Council budget for 2023/24

The Council will spend £595million on delivering public services across Lincolnshire next year. Of this £177million will be spent on Adult Care and Wellbeing, £97million on Children's Services, £47million on Highways maintenance and £22million Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Inflationary cost pressures of £9million in Highways have been funded through the county precept in addition to an extra £7million budgeted for additional highway maintenance activity in areas such as traffic regulation orders, pedestrian crossings and rural road schemes in 2023/24.

County Council underspend from 2022/23 – an overall underspend on last years budget of approx. £10million has been allocated to Highways maintenance over the next couple of years. This is a welcome boost to an already increased investment in local highways spend (details above), enabling the County Council to bring forward even more schemes that have been awaiting programming for many years.

Lincolnshire children' services retain 'outstanding' rating

Ofsted inspectors visited the county in April to review the help, protection and care afforded to children and young people from our Children's Services. They found that families across Lincolnshire continue to have access to localised services that help to keep them safe and support young people to make good progress.

Inspectors particularly noted how council staff, schools, and other adults involved in children's lives, worked together to ensure that help was provided quickly when needed, before any potential issues had a chance to escalate.

It is wonderful to see the hard work of our staff recognised, and this 'outstanding' review will no doubt inspire staff to build upon this success and find ways to improve the support we provide to families even further, so that Lincolnshire remains a great place for children to flourish.

Supporting independent living

Lincolnshire's Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) is providing an important lifeline for people who need support with aids and adaptations around their home.

The service helps provide a range of items, from something as simple as a walking frame to mobile hoists. This can be provided for people of all ages so that they can get about their own home independently.

Our recently agreed ICES contract with NRS Healthcare now also includes additional support services such as new stairlift and hoist services, and from April 2024 a wheelchair service.

We are already making a life-changing difference to people's lives with these services, so it is great to see our support expanding so we can help even more people across Lincolnshire live their lives to the full.

Highways maintenance performance data for Q4 2022/23

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Number of reports/schemes

% within response time

Emergency call outs – 2 hour response time 548 99.82%

Reactive works – 22 hour/6 day/25 day/80 day response time 12,582 94.46%

Planned highway schemes/maintenance works 47 97.87%

Highway programme of works for 2023/24

The programme for 2023/24 has now been agreed, and we have over 700 schemes that are planned throughout the year that include:

- 240 Footway micro surfacing sites that commence in April
- 87 Carriageway micro surfacing sites that commence in August
- 26 Footway reconstruction sites planned across 2023/24
- 53 Carriageway lining replacement sites that commence in June
- 25 Carriageway patching schemes planned across 2023/24
- 80 Carriageway resurfacing sites planned across 2023/24
- 170 Surface dressing sites that commence in June
- 20 Drainage improvement scheme planned across 2023/24

Details of all the schemes can be found on the interactive programme map within the LCC website.

Devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire

Following release of the Government's levelling up white paper the three upper tier councils of Greater Lincolnshire (North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire County) have been in talks with Government Ministers on a devolution deal for our region. This would see a number of powers, and additional funding, handed to a combined mayoral authority for Great Lincolnshire, with a directly elected mayor.

Subject to successful negotiations and a public consultation, it is anticipated that we would be holding elections for the directly elected mayor in 2025 alongside the next County Council elections. Negotiations are underway with a public consultation expected soon, followed by a formal bid to Government sometime in the Autumn. However, any such bid would need to be debated and approved by each of the upper tier Councils prior to this.

There are a number of key details to be negotiated and agreed, including governance of the combined mayoral authority which I have personal concerns about.

I welcome your views on this topic ahead of the next steps in the processes, so that I can better represent your views on this matter. Please email me at cllra.maughan@lincolnshire.gov.uk or call/Whatsapp 07707060022.

Rain won't go away? Come again another day

Named after the longest serving governor of Lincoln Castle's gaol, John Merryweather, the 'Merryweather Promise' has been guaranteeing that visitors to Lincoln Castle this summer can enjoy everything the medieval monument has to offer without worrying about the changeable British weather.

Visitors buying a day ticket between 22 July and 5 September can be confident that if it rains during the day of their visit for more than an hour they can return before the end of October for free.

Whilst the Victorian Prison and Magna Carta provide plenty to explore in doors, with the 'Merryweather Promise', come rain or shine, all our visitors will be able to enjoy the Medieval Wall Walk, relax in the grounds, and meet our dragons Lucy and Norman too. More information can be found at www.lincolncastle.com.

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Alexander Maughan

Lincolnshire County Councillor for Hough Division

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