

LUDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20th JANUARY 2015 AT 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Gist, Hegarty, Heyworth and Jones.

In Attendance: J. Madge (Clerk) and District Councillor Vaudry and 1 member of the public

Apologies: County Councillor Horner

1. Public Participation: None.
2. Declarations of any Personal or Prejudicial Interests by Members including consideration and decisions upon written requests for dispensation for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any): None
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on the 18th November 2014 had been circulated and were approved and signed.
4. Matters Arising:
 - (a) Village Green: Still no response from Ragley Estate.
 - (b) Lock: No work has started yet. Re-visit in the spring.
 - (c) Joint working for road maintenance: Clarification as to how it is proposed to work in practice to be sought from CC Horner.
 - (d) Defibrillator: Funds are likely to be available for 2, one for Dodwell Park and one for Luddington Village. BT have confirmed that the telephone kiosk in Luddington was used for 4 calls last year – 3 to freephone numbers and one emergency call. It was agreed to propose adoption of the kiosk at the Annual Parish Meeting in April.
 - (e) Letter to Western Power to be sent by the Clerk.
5. County Councillor's Report: CCllr Horner sent a written report as follows:
 - (a) Budget discussions are currently being held amongst the various political groups in the Council over points of detail. It is expected that the planned increase of 2% in council tax will go ahead and the programme to deliver £92 million in savings will remain on track. As the second year beckons the detailed decisions on savings are becoming increasingly hard to make.
 - (b) In view of the problems with hospital admissions WCC social care staff are working closely with health colleagues to avoid delays for people leaving hospital and to ensure they receive the care they need following discharge so they can be safely supported at home and so freeing beds in hospitals.
 - (c) Residents are being encouraged to recycle small Waste electrical and electronic products (WEEE) at Household Waste and Recycling Centres and, in doing so, stand the chance to win a brand new iPad courtesy of sponsors DHL Envirosolutions. The UK produces around 1 million tonnes of electrical waste and only 30% is recycled. The initiative is intended to increase this percentage.
 - (d) A new Lengthsman pilot will begin operating in some Parishes within the Rugby Borough. The Lengthsman Scheme is a local arrangement with these parishes to support them doing more in their local area. The jobs taken over could be; grass and verge cutting, footpath clearance, hedge, fence and grass

cutting management, drainage and localised flood prevention and reporting road defects.

- (e) WCC's approach to joining up education and health services for pre-schoolers has been held up as best practice in a national report launched by the Early Intervention Foundation. It is entitled 'Getting it right for families'.
- (f) Warwickshire's work to help disadvantaged families turn their lives around has made the county a top-performing local authority in the region and funding is now available from Government for a second phase roll out. Approaching 700 families have been helped in the county so far.
- (g) Warwickshire's Trading Standards Service has seized a number of fake and dangerous 'Frozen' dolls, before they reached the shops. Trading Standards Officers, working alongside the UK Border Force, identified the suspect Chinese imports of 'Frozen' dolls.
- (h) WCC Public Health says that remembering what we eat every day can be hard, and that keeping a food diary of everything we consume can help make us realise the quantities we are eating and drinking. Often when people keep a diary they naturally start to consume less.

6. District Councillor's Report: DCllr Vaudry reported as follows:

- (a) Core Strategy is being assessed by the Inspector this month, and there is a debate on the Gaydon/Lighthorne proposal on Thursday.
- (b) Elections in May – it is the first time that the whole District Council is being elected for a 4 year term, and therefore presents an opportunity for longer term policies and proposals to be considered.

7. Finance:

- (a) The Community Account stood at £7,263.84.
- (b) Budget and setting Precept for the year 2015/2016: The draft Budget was considered and in particular the possible cost of the election in May and the desirability of keeping any increase in precept to 2%. It had been confirmed that the addition of part of the Old Stratford & Drayton Parish area was not expected to increase the regular expenses. It was agreed to set a budget totalling £5,595.00 for the year to be defrayed by the anticipated VAT refund and reduction in existing reserves to provide a Precept of £4,925.00
- (c) The following bills were passed for payment:
 - i. £30.00 for Luddington Village Hall
 - ii. £30.00 for CPRE annual subscription
 - iii. £669.50 for P Rudge for work between 19th August and 3rd December 2014.
 - iv. £505.00 for Clerk's Salary and HMRC for October to December 2014.

8. Specific Agenda Items:

Presentation by Derek Wilkinson of Sandfields Farm:

Mr Wilkinson confirmed that the business of Sandfields Farm had been doing well through the recession of the past few years, but they anticipated tougher times ahead especially regarding issues of staffing. The Student Agricultural Workers Scheme under which foreign students were allowed to come to the country for the growing season, but then had to return home, has been terminated, which means that Sandfields have had to recruit more European workers to meet their business needs, resulting in there being less

control over what happens to the workers at the end, or even towards the end, of the growing season. The Company therefore wants to improve the accommodation offered to its seasonal workers to enable it to be able to attract and look after its staff better.

The Company is a private company farming approximately 3,500 acres (1,365 hectares) producing mainly salad onions beans and legumes asparagus and cereals and supplying major supermarkets. The Company employs 125 permanent staff (managers, drivers and packers) about 500 seasonal workers, mostly housed in the mobile units at Manor Farm which have permitted development rights requiring them to be moved at the end of the season and about 250 packhouse workers, 175 of which are housed at Upper Moor Hostel which has been given planning permission subject to conditions agreed between the Company and Wychavon DC. The Company does not use employment agencies for the farm seasonal workers.

They are trying to reduce the turnover of seasonal staff – they have about 50% to 70% of their seasonal employees who return each year, but are increasingly finding that they lose workers towards the end of the season as there is nothing to prevent them from seeking other work in this country.

The current temporary accommodation at Manor Farm is 15% mobile homes and 85% portacabins, with shower and cooking facilities, a canteen and gym room on the Manor Farm site. It is difficult to improve the living conditions with the current permitted development arrangements. At Upper Moor they have permanently sited good quality mobile homes. There is a Section 106 Agreement agreeing that they are only occupied for the growing season and planning conditions so they are painted green and screened by a planting scheme. Their employees much prefer the accommodation at this site to Luddington.

The Company want to apply for a similar arrangement at Manor Farm so they can move to having 90% of their seasonal workers in such permanently sited mobile homes within the next 2 years, and will propose the same restrictions on occupation and ensure screening.

In response to questions Mr Wilkinson confirmed that the new accommodation would be on the same site and covering the same area as the existing temporary accommodation. He also confirmed that all workers are vetted on recruitment both by local agents in the foreign countries and by the Company's own checks on legalities.

9. Correspondence:

- (a) Stratford on Avon & District CAB Annual Review. It was agreed to make a donation of £50.00 for the work of the CAB.
- (b) CSW Broadband Updates – November 2014 and January 2015.
- (c) WALC – New Guide regarding Affordable Rural Housing
- (d) WALC – Nominations for Attendance at Royal Garden Party on 28th May 2015. A nomination was agreed.
- (e) WALC – Report into Inquiry on National Planning Policy Framework
- (f) NALC – Transparency Code for Parish Councils with turnover less than £25,000 (effective from July 2015)
- (g) WALC – Appointment of new County Officer for WALC
- (h) WALC – Election Timetable
- (i) WALC – Dealing with Media and Filming at Meetings
- (j) SDC – Revised Register of Electors at 1st December 2014
- (k) SDC – Parish & Partners Briefing
- (l) WCC – Police priorities for quarter from December 2014

- (m) Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan Consultation
- (n) WCC – Transport and Highways Update
- (o) Clerk to circulate further relevant correspondence

10. Planning: None

11. Business for Future Consideration: Requirements to comply with Transparency Code.

Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 17th February 2015 at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm