

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of
LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL
held online on Monday 16th November 2020**

PRESENT: Cllrs. S Collins (Chair), G Nicholas, A Toomey and T Beard (Co-opted at meeting)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr I Barrett (Clerk), County Cllr. B Robinson and 13 local residents

1. There were no apologies for absence.
2. There were declarations of interest.
3. There was no discussion in Public Forum.

4. Councillor Vacancy

The Chairman summarised that after the previous resignation by a Parish Councillor an insufficient number of requests had been received by the District Council (eight out a required ten) to require an election to fill the position. Therefore, the Council was given the mandate to co-opt a replacement. The vacancy had been advertised and there had been only one expression of interest. The Chairman considered that the applicant, Ms Tash Beard, possessed all the required attributes needed to fill the role. The Council voted unanimously to co-opt Ms Beard who was warmly welcomed to the Council. The clerk advised that it was normal practice to sign a Declaration of Acceptance in front of the clerk who would then countersign as the Proper Officer. However, due to the current situation a Declaration of Acceptance would be sent to Cllr Beard.

5. Planning

The clerk reported on the progress of planning discussions.

Two works to trees applications had been received prior to the meeting and requiring comment by 10 November 2020. These had been circulated to Councillors and no objections received.

- P1699/20/TCA. Low Greens Station Lane Longhope. Fell x 1 large multi-stemmed Conifer
- P1674/20/TCA. Glenoran Napping Lane Longhope. Pollard x 1 Accacia Tree, reduction of x 6 Conifers and x 1 Holly at Glenoran.

Additional information had been received for the following planning application requiring comment by 11 November 2020.

P1497/20/PQ3PA. Sheperdine Top Barn Land At Yartleton Lane Gloucester Road. Prior Notification for the conversion of existing barn to a self-build low impact studio dwelling and associated operational development.

After some discussion, and recognising that the commentary date had expired, it was considered by the Council that a site visit by the Planning Committee was required.

Afternote: Subsequent to the comment expiry date, the District Council has refused the planning application.

The planning report had been circulated to Councillors. The clerk also reported receipt of a recent application which had not been included in the report. The discussion concerning the planning applications is summarised below.

- P1768/20/FUL. Rose Cottage, The Slad, Little London, Longhope. Conversion of existing garage and annexed accommodation to solely annexed accommodation with associated works

The Council decided that a Planning Committee site visit was required.

- P1737/20/FUL. The Sun, The Slad, Little London, Longhope. Loft conversion with installation of rear dormer and associated works.

The Council decided that a Planning Committee site visit was required.

- P1580/20/FUL. Dick Whittington Farm Park, Blakemore Park, Little London, Longhope. Change of Use of application site to Equine Use and construction of Manege and associated works

The clerk reported that he had received correspondence from a local residence alleging a toxic waste dump in the area of this development and expressing disquiet as to possible leaching into the ground. A previous site visit had observed a certain amount of waste in the area, but the nature of this was not known. The Council were concerned as to the drainage arrangements for the manege.

The Council decided that a Planning Committee site visit was required.

There were no objections to the following applications

- P1582/20/FUL. Dick Whittington Farm Park, Blakemore Park, Little London, Longhope. Construction of no dig pathways around the site.
- P0116/20/DISCON. Richard Read Transport, Longhope Business Park, Monmouth Road, Longhope. Discharge of condition 07 (electric vehicle charging points) of planning permission P0293/20/FUL

At the previous meeting (19 October 2020) the Council had discussed the formal consultation issued by the Forest of Dean District for the diversion of a public footpath crossing land at Woodland View farm and emerging on a public highway at Nags Head. Concern was expressed at this proposal as the diversion would result in the path meeting with a busy road at a point with limited visibility. It had been agreed to defer a decision on this consultation until discussions had been undertaken with local walkers associations, principally the North Dean Ramblers. The Council agreed that the footpath diversion would compromise the safety of walkers and that this was not merited by the rationale for the proposed diversion and therefore wished to raise an objection to the diversion. The clerk was directed to notifying the District Council of the objection.

The clerk reported on a previous planning application which the Council had previously considered.

- P0090/20/DISCON Richard Read Transport, Monmouth Road. Discharge of condition 08 (Pedestrian Crossing) of planning application P0293/20/FUL.

This application advocated the establishment of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing leading from the Richard Read site to Longhope Village and marked by dropped kerbs. Notwithstanding a consultancy report the Parish Council considered that a road safety hazard existed without a formalised pedestrian crossing. At a previous meeting the clerk had been tasked with writing to the District Council expressing the concerns of the Parish Council and that they be formally recorded. The clerk reported that this planning application had been refused by the District Council.

6. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 19 October 2020 were agreed as a true record, to be signed when conditions permit.

7. Members' Reports

Cllr Collins reported that he had laid a wreath on behalf of the Council at the Longhope ceremony of remembrance on 08 November 2020. Councillors agreed that the cost of the wreath should be funded from personal contributions, rather than being paid from the Council budget.

Cllr Collins further reported that he had attended a Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) course on 12 November 2020 in Chairmanship Training. The clerk had received a copy of the training pack up and suggested that the other councillors may find some of the material useful. The clerk was directed to forward the notes to all councillors.

Cllr Toomey stated that the matter of the disrepair of several stiles on the footpath leading from Mill Lane to the village was now firmly in the hands of the County Council and rectification was planned.

Cllr Nicholas reported that he had met with the local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who had undertaken a check on vehicle speeds through the village using a mobile speed camera. The results of this had been limited, however it was noted that the checks were conducted at a quiet time. Cllr Nicholas stated the PCSOs were keen to obtain information from the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) situated in Church Road.

Cllr Nicholas outlined the quotes that he had received for industrial sized refuse bins to be located in the village. Biffa could provide a 660 litre bin which would be emptied every two weeks for £410 per year but did not offer a green waste option. Smiths were offering a 1100 litre bin for £339 per year which would be emptied on an 'on demand' basis. Although Smiths does not offer a green waste bin they would be able to a large bag which again would be emptied on an 'on-demand' basis. It was therefore considered that Smiths provided the better option. After a question from a member of the public it was stated that the bin would be sited at the side of the Pavilion.

8. Committee Reports

(a) Latchen Room Management Committee

There was no Latchen Room Management Committee report.

(b) Longhope Emergency Fund

It was understood that the change to the signatories for the Longhope Emergency Fund was in progress.

(c) Recreation Ground Management Committee

It was reported that further work had been attempted on the basket swings but this had been hampered by poor weather. Cllr Nicholas stated that the planned date of installation of the goal units was 16 December 2020. It was considered that it would be useful to put together a leaf letter detailing the improvements implemented by the Council. It was therefore agreed that the Council would collectively produce the publication. It was further observed that the play area was in a generally poor state. Cllr Beard was tasked by the Council to lead on the play area.

9. Street Trading Consent

The clerk presented an application for a Street Trading Consent for Peppers Perfect Pizzas. The proposal was that a mobile pizza oven would visit villages in the area on a rotational basis, offering pizzas and refreshments for purchase. It had been requested that the oven be set up in the Latchen Room car park on a pre-determined rota. The clerk noted that he had contacted the Latchen Room Committee concerning the matter and that the Committee supported the venture. After some discussion the Council decided to raise an objection to the license application on the basis that; it would take business away from traders in the village; litter would be generated at the site; there would be an outdoor congregation of people with a possible disturbance to residents; there would be increased traffic; car parking could become an issue; the surface of the Latchen room carpark is uneven and as the external lighting is poor this could present a safety hazard.

During the discussion the Chair accepted a comment from a resident of Nupend Gardens. Disquiet was expressed as to the tendency of attendees at events or activities at the Latchen Room using Nupend Gardens as overflow parking. The resident pointed out that those living in the road were required to pay a parking levy. Whereas they were as accommodating as possible, such as raising no objections when the road was used for relief parking by other villagers when Church Road was being resurfaced, constant usage by those attending the Latchen Room was a considerable inconvenience. The Council directed the clerk to write to the Latchen Room Committee, asking them to take action to dissuade Latchen Room attendees parking in Nupend Gardens.

10. Clerk's Report and Correspondence

- Longhope Handyman. The clerk reported that the Longhope Handyman had commenced employment on 02 November 2020.
- Climate Action Plan. The Council had received a number of communications sponsored by the Forest of Dean District Council and distributed to all town and parish councils, urging the formulation of a Climate Action Plan. It was considered that it was perhaps not the right time for Longhope to develop a specific plan, nevertheless the Council would always consider the impact on the climate and ecology of any action that it implemented. However, to support the various initiatives in this area the Chairman considered that it would be useful to explore the viability of installing electric vehicle charging points in the village. The clerk was instructed to include this as an agenda item for the next meeting.

- Cobalt and NHS Partnership. The clerk had received a request from the Cobalt and NHS Partnership for a donation of £200. The Partnership maintains a series of goals to include scanning NHS cancer patients, scanning dementia patients, supporting two dementia research nurses and supporting two breast cancer research nurses. Due to the situation generated by Covid-19 community fund raising activities have been cancelled and Cobalt is suffering a significant drop in income. The Council agreed that this was a deriving cause and agreed a donation of £200.
- Mayhill Bench. A request had been received from two local residents to place a bench in the copse at the top Mayhill. This was as a commemoration of the many happy times that the couple had spent on Mayhill. Whereas the Council was sympathetic to the request it was felt that there were already sufficient benches on Mayhill and the request was therefore refused. A suggestion was made that a bench between the car park and the top of Mayhill would be useful, giving the opportunity for visitors to rest. However, as this would be on National Trust land they would need to be approached. The Chairman noted that Longhope Parish Council does not have a bench policy and directed the clerk to include this as an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Brook End Parking. The clerk reported that emails had been received from residents in Brook End complaining about inconsiderate parking and the creation of an obstruction. The clerk stated that he had contacted the local Police Community Support Officer concerning the matter and she had undertaken to include the area in her regular patrols. The Chairman noted that there was very little else the Council could do.
- Vehicle Activated Sign. A local resident had written to the clerk asking as to when the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) would be repaired. It was stated that it took two people to move the sign to another location; however, it was probable that the battery needed recharging. The Chairman undertook to investigate restoring the VAS to working order.
- WI Tree. A siting proposal had been received for the planting of the Maple Leaf tree to celebrate the centenary of the Longhope Women's Institute. It was proposed by the Women's Institute that the planting ceremony would be conducted after the current period of Covid-19 lockdown. The Council approved the selected site.
- Play Area. A representative from a playground design and installation service (Kompan) wished to visit Longhope on 03 December 2020 with design proposals for the play area. Cllrs Beard and Nicholas confirmed that they were able to meet with the representative.
- Covid-19 Volunteer Group. The clerk had received an update from the Covid-19 volunteer group. Over 60 volunteers were available to assist where necessary and 23 households were being supported on a regular basis. The co-ordinator of the group wished to organise some recognition for both residents and volunteers at Christmas. This would take the form of a Christmas card for everyone involved in the support group and a box of chocolates or biscuits for each household which has been assisted. To help pay for this gesture a contribution of £150 was requested. The Council agreed that this was a very worthy cause and agreed a donation of £150.

11. Finance

The following invoice had already been approved for payment but was presented for record purposes:

4 Seasons Worx	Grass cutting	£2652.00
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The following invoices were approved for payment:

Merlin Waste	Dog waste collection, October	£156.00
GAPTC	Training Course	£25.00
Ian Barrett	Salary - October 2020	£337.48
Ian Barrett	Salary – November 2020	£327.12
Paul Sims	Salary – November 2020	£160.00

The clerk noted that the two salary payments (for subsequent months) to Ian Barrett were due to the pay agents requesting that the pay submissions of the handyman and clerk be aligned.

The monthly financial report was received and approved. The clerk pointed out to the Council that the budgetary line for the salary of the clerk had been exceeded. This was as a result of the extra work and consequent payment undertaken by the previous clerk. The allotment expenditure budget had also been exceeded. This was attributed to a larger than expected water bill. It was suggested that when the annual renewal letter was sent to the allotment holders that they be reminded to be economical in water usage, otherwise an increase in rent could be necessary.

Comments by County Councillor Robinson

Cllr Robinson informed the Council that the Covid infection rate was increasing in Gloucestershire.

Cllr Robinson reminded the Council that the consultation period for the preferred option for the Forest of Dean Local Plan 2021 to 2041 had been extended to 29 January 2021. Cllr Robinson encouraged a response and suggested that this would be a useful agenda item for the next meeting.

Cllr Nicholas asked Cllr Robinson if there was any central funding available for the Longhope play area. Cllr Robinson stated that assistance might be possible but this would need to be identified as small sums and to be spent before the end of the Financial Year. Cllr Nicholas and Cllr Beard would provide proposals to Cllr Robinson.

ACTION: GN and TB

12. Next Meeting – Monday 18 January 2021 at 7pm

Signed:.....Chairman. Date:.....