

Letheringham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 24th June 2019 at Cherry Tree in Letheringham

In Attendance

Terry Carlin (TC) (Chairman & Financial Officer)

Jean Barker (JB)

Maurice Finch (MF)

David Allan (DA) (Clerk)

Public Attendance:

David & Ruth Holborrow (DH & RH), Jan McNeill (JM), Polly Ffitch (PF), Mike Lloyd (ML) and Malcolm & Janet Ross (MR & JR)

The Meeting opened at 7.56pm

2019.35 Apologies

None received.

2019.36 Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Co-Opted Councillors

Following the co-option of JB and Matthew Bickerton at the LPC Meeting in May, JB signed the declaration, with that for MB to be completed at the next meeting in July.

All councillors were advised regarding their inclusion on the online Registration of Interests, and the need to provide information requested.

2019.37 Declaration of Interests

None, save that MF had completed a prototype boom as a potential alternative to the proposed Darcy Boom. This was not considered to give rise to any conflict of interest.

2019.38 Approval of Minutes & Matters Arising

Minutes of LPC meeting on 13th May 2019 were approved unanimously and signed by TC

2019.39 Matters of Report

An email received from DE Keeble regarding the damage to the sand-box on Blyth Hill was read to the meeting. Liability was accepted, and a proposal made that DE Keeble provide a type-approved yellow plastic bin to replace it.

It was noted that the damaged sand-box was not situated within 1.2 metres of the highway as suggested, and that the replacement value on the asset register was £100. TC referred to proposals for a wooden replacement to be constructed, and there was a general consensus that a yellow plastic replacement would look out of place.

It was resolved that DA should respond to DE Keeble requesting compensation in the sum of £100 in full and final settlement, emphasising that the damaged box had been correctly situated and referring to the alternative of settlement through an insurance claim.

2019.40 Proposals for Clearance of the River Deben

TC referred to the proposed purchase of five 3-metre Darcy Booms which had been trialled by the Environment Agency (EA), at a cost of £560, albeit with a potential reclamation of VAT, and also to an alternative wooden prototype constructed by MF, before opening up the meeting as a Public Forum to enable all residents to air their views prior to a decision being made.

DH referred to the EA trial using the Darcy Booms, which cleared a 60-metre run in 2½ minutes, albeit that this did not include getting the spoil to the banks. DH noted that the booms captured weed and created current, and queried whether the wooden alternative would be as effective, although MF observed that his prototype had had the same effect when he trialled it.

DH observed that this was the first year when weed never left the river, largely due to the obstruction created by the fallen tree from Paul Clarke's land, and noted the need to clear the weed from the entire length to avoid it quickly returning. DH noted that the growth was temperature sensitive, but does not disappear and the river appeared to be becoming increasingly fertile due to run-off from agricultural land, resulting in accelerated growth. DH stated that the river had been weed-bound from Boatman's for about 2-months now, whereas this stage had not been reached until July last year.

With regard to MF's alternative, DH observed that the Darcy Booms had been tried and tested and could be easily stored. If these were not purchased, there was a risk that the issue would remain unresolved in August and September.

MR endorsed DH's comments and referred to his experience of using Darcy Booms to clear the River Lee in preparation for the London Olympics, observing that they had proved to be 100% effective and fit for purpose.

MR referred to a further proposal to hire a weed-cutter boat, and that the Booms may be most effective if this was done first, but that there was real momentum in addressing this issue and, while MF's alternative may work, it might not be as effective as the Darcy Booms. MR therefore requested that the LPC purchase the Darcy Booms so that they could be delivered within a few days and put to work, and suggested that MF's alternative could be used as a back-up and potentially left in place to restrict regrowth.

MF agreed with the reference to momentum to address this issue, which was why the wooden prototype had been constructed, at minimal cost. It could be made heavier and MF simply offered it as an alternative option and suggested that it could be properly tested rather than simply rejected.

There was discussion regarding the quantity of spoil produced by clearing, the fact that dealing with this was the most difficult aspect of the proposed clearance, the type of equipment that could be used, and issue regarding the landing of any such arisings on land belonging to EFP and Paul Clarke, the latter having objected to this.

MR referred to the weed-cutter boat costing around £500 per day, and JM stated that she was keen to see both forms of clearance used and had spoken to Fiona at EFP regarding the removal of one of her trees from the river. DH observed that the EFP tree was not holding weed, this was being done by the tree from Paul Clarke's land, but the tree from EFP was making access more difficult so it's clearance would greatly assist.

In response to enquiries, TC confirmed that the LPC had sufficient funds to purchase the Darcy Booms if this was considered appropriate, which was the point of holding this additional meeting. TC noted that there was a general consensus that the issue with river needed to be addressed, the question was whether the proposed purchase provided value for money, and/or whether MF's alternative should be pursued either on its own or in combination with the purchase of the Darcy Booms.

PF queried whether there might be any flexibility in price, although MR stated that the cost of around £600 plus VAT was good value and, with the use of a weed-cutter, would make a significant difference to the river and might influence landowners to agree to clear trees to facilitate this project.

JB observed that there were eight residents present whose properties neighboured the river, and queried the view of other residents, although it was noted that the issue and agenda had been circulated generally.

MR stated that any costs relating to the hire of the weed-cutter would not fall on residents generally but would need to be met by residents neighbouring the river. A quote was awaited regarding costs, with work anticipated every two-years. MR confirmed that the costs of this would not fall onto the LPC and that there appeared to be general agreement between owners on the river regarding this.

TC observed that any Booms purchased would be recorded as an asset and would be useful, and also could raise revenue by being hired out to others.

Following this discussion, it was resolved unanimously that the LPC should proceed with the purchase of the Darcy Booms as proposed.

TC observed that MF should continue with the construction and testing of his prototype, and that the LPC could meet the costs of any expenses incurred. On resolution, this was also agreed with unanimously.

TC noted that the power to levy specific charges on a section of residents to meet the costs of the proposed weed-cutter hire would need to be considered carefully in the absence of any other alternative arrangement.

2019.41 Planning

The recent submissions (DC/19/2110/PN3, DC/19/2132/FUL and DC/19/2133/LBC), relating to Abbey Farm and the proposed conversion of a barn to residential units and the conversion of two further barn to two five-bedroomed dwellings were considered. The details regarding these applications had been circulated prior to the meeting.

TC referred to comments made in relation to the previous and similar applications and suggested that the same observations applied.

There was a discussion regarding these and the previous similar applications, the reference to section Q permitted development, and the amendment of the conversion to four rather than five units.

Previous concerns regarding the lack of detail regarding use of the land around the proposed dwellings and the potential negative impact on the Church were endorsed, and TC referred to the lack of clarity regarding the scheduled monument to the north, and what plans if any there were with the caravans already in position.

Concerns were also raised regarding the plan for the track used to access the Church, which appeared to be the main access route to the proposed development, and whether this would involve tarmacking and/or lighting.

TC also queried whether the use of permitted development for the conversion to four units could properly apply when there was a concurrent application for two additional large-scale conversions on adjacent barns.

At the conclusion of this discussion, it was resolved that DA would write to the Planning Department to express the LPC's views, namely that there was no outright objection to the proposals, but with concerns regarding the matters discussed.

2019.42 Audit

DA confirmed that the Certificate of Exemption and other requisite information had been emailed to the Auditors, and the response received was read to the meeting.

The Notice for the Exercise of Public Rights was completed, with DA to upload this to the website along with the Internal Audit form signed by DH.

The Environment Agency had recently attended and experimented with methods of addressing the issue of algae and duckweed on the River.

2019.43 Conclusion

At the conclusion of the meeting, gratitude was expressed for the refurbishment of the Notice-board, the cost of which was covered by JB.

TC also noted that there had been no further comment regarding the Sizewell proposals, but that it appeared that the four-village bypass plan had been rejected.

The meeting closed at 9.28

Signed.......... Date..........

Next Meeting: Scheduled for the 22nd July 2019 at 7.45 pm in the Village Hall

Appendices follow:

- A Notice of Public Rights 2019
- B: Annual Internal Audit Report 2019

Letheringham Parish Council

NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (EXEMPT AUTHORITY)

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 25, 26 and 27
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement 25th June 2019 (a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The AGAR has been published with this notice. It will not be reviewed by the appointed auditor, since the smaller authority has certified itself as exempt from the appointed auditor's review. Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the AGAR, the accounting records for the financial year to which it relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2019, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) David Allan The Old Vicarage Letheringham IP13 7RA letheringham@btinternet.com</p> <p>commencing on (c) Tuesday 25th June 2019</p> <p>and ending on (d) Wednesday 24 July 2019</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and • The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority. <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is only subject to review by the appointed auditor if questions or objections raised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 lead to the involvement of the auditor. The appointed auditor is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team) 1 Westferry Circus Canary Wharf London E14 4HD (sba@pkf-littlejohn.com)</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Terence Carlin, Chairman & RFO</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

LEATHERINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

The internal audit for 2018/19 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			✓
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2017/18, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. ("Not Covered" should only be ticked where the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2017/18 AGAR)	✓		
L. During summer 2018 this authority has correctly provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			Not applicable ✓
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			Not applicable ✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

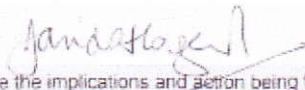
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

13/06/2019

DAVID HOUSKOW

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

13/06/2019

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).