

# Lydiard Millicent Parish Council

**Public Question Time:** Members of the public are invited to make representations to Lydiard Millicent Parish Council on *matters relating to items on this Agenda* (Public Bodies [admission to meetings] Act 1960), before the meeting commences (limited to 10 minutes). Every effort will be made to give accurate answers to all questions, but in some cases further research may be necessary when an answer will be given by the Chairman or Clerk as soon as possible.

## AGENDA

1. **Election of Chairman**  
Due to the resignation of Alan Pflieger, there is currently no chairman. Councillors will be invited to put forward nominations and to elect a chairman; the term of office being until May 2021.
2. **Acceptance of Office**  
Due to this meeting being held remotely, the Council is asked that the chairman's acceptance of office be accepted orally at this meeting and signed and witnessed on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
3. **Election of Vice Chairman**  
Due to the resignation of Dean Cobb, there is currently no vice chairman. Councillors will be invited to put forward nominations to elect a vice chairman, the term of office being until May 2021.
4. **Apologies for Absence**  
The Council is asked to note any apologies and to accept reasons they consider to be appropriate.
5. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by this Council in July 2012. Members are reminded that it is their personal responsibility to make sure the Register of Interests contains up to date information. If changes are needed please contact the Clerk, who can arrange for the changes to be carried out.
6. **Minutes**  
To confirm and sign as a true record Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

7. **Correspondence / Diary Dates**

The Council is asked to note the following events:

- i. Note of thanks from the Lord Lieutenant's office to all those volunteering and helping neighbours in these stressful times.
- ii. Remembrance Sunday is on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November this year, the 11<sup>th</sup> being the following Wednesday. It is usual for the Council to lay a wreath on behalf of the parish at the war memorial within the Church grounds.
- iii. Christmas Celebrations: In previous years the Council has sited a lighted Christmas Tree in front of the Parish Hall in early December for the festive season. Additionally, last year the red phone box on The Street was decorated, thanks to a local resident, children were able to post letters direct to Santa for him to reply.

8. **Planning Matters**

*Appendix A*

- a. The Council is asked to note the decisions made by Wiltshire Council since the last meeting.
- b. The Council is asked to consider and make comments on the Planning Applications indicated below.
  - i. 20/08074/FUL – 38 Stone Lane, Lydiard Millicent  
Proposed alterations to garage fenestration to include decking and a change of use of part agricultural to residential.
  - ii. 20/08131/FUL - The Hayloft, 8a Wood Lane, Brinkworth  
Proposed conversion of Barn to 1no Residential Dwelling, erection of boundary treatments including boundary wall and associated works.
  - iii. 20/08326/FUL – 9 The Beeches, Lydiard Millicent  
Proposed single storey extension to front, side and rear elevations.
  - iv. 20/08777/FUL – 31 The Close, Lydiard Millicent  
Proposed detached garage.

9. **Finance**

*Appendix B*

- a. *Grass Cutting Contract:* The Councils grass cutting contract was last formally considered in February 2015, with a three-year contract commencing in April 2015. The successful contractor in 2015 has been very obliging and has kept his prices the same as the contract for the last two years. There have also been some amendments which the contractor

has been accommodating within his workload, although some of the extra work has been charged, prices have always been very reasonable.

The Council is asked to consider the attached Contract, making any changes they feel are necessary. On agreement of the contract, invitations for tender can be sent to any interested parties. Three contractors have enquired as to when LMPC will be inviting tenders for a grass cutting contract.

- b. *Cemetery Fees and Hire Charges:* The Council is asked to consider its Fees and Charges for the next financial year. There has been no increase in Cemetery Fees for several years, hire of the recreation field was reviewed two years ago.

The Council's instructions are sought.

- c. *Equipment/Tools:* The Council is asked to set a limit for authorisation of expenditure for the purchase of replacement office equipment and the purchase of hand tools for use by the Handyman. It is also anticipated that some mechanical tools will be required at a later date.

It is recommended, to allow for efficient use of time, that the Council sets a budget and delegates authority to spend to the Clerk and Handyman.

#### 10. **COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Council is asked to set out a way forward regarding:

- a. *Actions required due to changes in Government Advice:* Throughout this pandemic there have been a number of strategies put in place by the Government nationally; some of these have been effected almost immediately, others within a more manageable timescale. During the last changes Councillors were unhappy the Council took action without full consultation of all members. So that the same incident does not occur again the Council is asked to set out guidelines for Councillors and Officers to follow when the need arises to take action quickly. Although these guidelines would be pertinent at this time, the same guidelines could be used generally when action is required more quickly than the next meeting.

The Council's view and decision is requested.

- b. *Community leadership during this time:* Members will be aware that during the national lock-down and shielding back in March and April a group of volunteers helped with shopping and errands for vulnerable residents. It was agreed at that time, the Council should be used as the first point of contact for those in need, and for referrals from other organisations. Wiltshire Council was sent the required details and the clerk kept in contact with all volunteers by e-mail and telephone; passing on referrals from partner organisations.

Latest reports are pointing towards there being a further “lock down” or at least some restrictions, as there are in other areas of the country. The Council is therefore asked to consider the following:

- i. Re-establish the council help and administration that was provided earlier in the year.
- ii. Promote an informal approach, where neighbours shop and run errands for those not able to go out; and anyone without help contact Wiltshire Council.

The Council is asked which option they wish to follow, in readiness to inform partner organisations when required.

**11. Communications**

It has been noted recently that some residents are becoming frustrated with how the Council communicates with the parish. This has been an on-going issue with a Communications Working Group being set up, and a website policy (ref: 099/17) being drawn up in August 2017. There is currently no general communications policy set up for Lydiard Millicent Parish Council.

The Council is asked to consider how it wishes to move forward with communications. When considering this item, members are reminded that the Clerk is able to comment once there is a Council decision, or a request for explanation on Council procedures, any comments needing an opinion, or reassurance should come from the chairman (on behalf of the Council) or individual members.

The Council's instructions are sought.

**12. Play Area Reports**

The Council is asked to note that the Annual RoSPA inspections have been carried out on the Council owned play areas. Reports were circulated to all members on 9<sup>th</sup> October for information.

The Council's instructions are sought on how any remedial works needed should be completed.

**13. Casual Vacancies**

The Council is reminded that there are currently three casual vacancies which need to be filled by co-option, with a further two vacancies being brought to the attention of electors of the parish, prior to being returned to the Council for co-option. This makes five vacancies from the total establishment of eleven; for a Parish Council to continue lawfully it must have at least one third of its number present; in this case the number is four.

Members, (and residents of the parish,) are asked to suggest suitable candidates. If chosen, they will serve as a co-opted member. The next

parish council elections are due to be held on 6 May 2021, when all Councillors must stand for election to continue serving.

The Council is asked to consider a strategy for attracting new people to this role, especially as diminishing numbers will make it difficult for the council to stay quorate and function effectively. If the total number of councillors falls below four, the Council becomes inquorate and will not be able to function lawfully without the assistance of Wiltshire Council.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Lydiard Millicent Parish Council will take place on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020.

At its meeting in September, the Council resolved to hold virtual meetings in October and November, consideration for further meetings (045/20) to the end of this administration, are to be discussed at this meeting.

Legislation allows for Parish Councils to hold virtual meetings until May 2021. A licence has been purchased to facilitate virtual contact, including remote meetings. The licence is valid until September 2021, so there will be no further financial cost to holding remote meetings to May 2021.

The Council's instructions are sought.