

MINUTES of the Ordinary meeting of Lydiard Millicent Parish Council held on Thursday 1st October 2020 at 7.00pm. Due to COVID 19 restrictions this meeting was held remotely.

PRESENT : Cllrs Dean Cobb (vice chairman), Vernon Montgomery, Richard Selwood, Mike Sharp, Phil Shepherd, Jim Stubbs.
Officers: Mrs Deborah Bourne (clerk), Mr Colin Tydeman (Handyman)

Also Present : Two members of the public

Public Question Time

The clerk and chairman responded to questions asked during this time, about when the Parish Council office is open to the public.

048/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Andre Kayani, it was RESOLVED to accept Cllr Kayani's reasons for absence for the next six months in accordance with LGA¹ 1972 s85(1).

Members also informed the clerk they had received an e-mail from Cllr Pflieger resigning from the council.

049/20 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mike Sharp declared an interest in the agenda item referring to the Parish Hall. Cllr Sharp is chairman of the Parish Hall trustees; as a trustee Cllr Sharp is bound by Charity Law.

050/20 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2020 were adopted. The Council instructed the chairman to sign these as a true record as soon as convenient (signing of minutes was not possible due to it being a virtual meeting).

Minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held Wednesday 23rd September 2020 were displayed on screen, allowing all members to read them. The chairman raised a question concerning number of signs needed, other members' recollections were as recorded in the minutes. These minutes were then adopted with the Council instructing the chairman to sign as above.

051/20 Report from the Clerk

The clerks written report was noted.

Members enquired if the report could be shared on social media so that residents understood what the Council did. The report is on the Councils website, with the agenda, any member can share a link to the website, in the individual member's name. There is no Council presence on Social Media at this time.

¹ Local Government Act

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Chairman

052/20

Report from the Handyman

The chairman welcomed Colin Tydeman to the meeting. Colin was appointed Handyman in March, with this being his first attendance at a Council meeting.

Members were able to discuss various items of work that have been started, and identify areas needing extra attention. Members also discussed the need for tools to be purchased and for some training course attendance.

The written report was noted; with members expressing their pleasure at the work already carried out, especially in the current situation. Members expressed a wish that a schedule of tasks be drawn up to act as a base for his work.

RESOLVED that a number of basic tools be purchased, with the handyman compiling a list of other, more specialised, equipment necessary for further consideration of the Council. Further RESOLVED that training be booked as required.

053/20

Planning Matters

- a. The Council noted recent planning and appeal decisions made for properties within the parish.
- b. The following planning application was considered
 - i 20/06899/FUL -76, Chestnut Springs, Lydiard Millicent
Single storey side extension

Cllr Sharp has sent a response to Wiltshire Council on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Neighbours have also been in touch with Councillors expressing their concerns at this application.

The Council requested that the Unitary Councillor be contacted to arrange for this application to be “called in” for discussion at a Planning Committee meeting.

RESOLVED to send the following objection to Wiltshire Council:

This proposed development will take up a prominent position on the main entrance road into Chestnut Springs, and is completely out of character with the surrounding street scene. The existing properties leading into the estate at this location are all positioned well within their own large plots, affording the area space and light.

While this application is for a “side extension” it will protrude to the front of properties mentioned above at the entrance to the estate; coming further forward than the front elevations of those bungalows at right angles to the identified application. This will lead to a loss of visual amenity to neighbouring properties, especially at No 77 where light and a much treasured view across the open grassed area on the road junction will be lost. Although not yet adopted by Wiltshire Council, the Lydiard Millicent Neighbourhood Plan was given significant weight at a recent Appeal hearing.

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Chairman

With that in mind the planning officer's attention is respectfully drawn to policy LM4 of the aforementioned Plan which identifies that important views must be considered. These protected views not only refer to wide angled views into open countryside but to local views onto (and from) public open spaces within the built up area. The policy goes on to require that developers

“....should set out details on how they take into account the important views by way of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line,”

The Council can see no evidence of where local visual amenity has been mitigated, or considered, in this application and therefore must object strongly to this application, and respectfully ask that the Planning Officer takes these points into account when considering application 20/06899/FUL.

054/20 Finance

- a. It was noted that monthly payments had been authorised by two members as required under the Councils Financial Regulations. An invoice for £250 has been received from Wiltshire Council, the RFO² is not aware of this cost. Members also did not have knowledge as to why an invoice should be sent. The RFO is instructed to challenge the invoice prior to payment.
- b. The Council noted the nationally agreed pay deal for Local Government Officers; the 2.75% increase is back dated to 1st April 2020. The chairman asked for written confirmation of this increase to be kept in the salary records for audit purposes.
- c. It was noted that currently there are four Councillors able to authorise payments: Cllrs Dean Cobb, Alan Pflieger, Richard Selwood and Mike Sharp. As the council is growing, authorisation of payments is becoming onerous for the four members.

RESOLVED that all Councillors be authorised to release payments from the Councils bank account. The RFO will contact all members to set up appropriate access to the accounts and to arrange suitable mandates.

055/20 Autumn Work on the Recreation Field

The recreation field has a high ratio of weeds to grass and needs attention. Both football and cricket clubs have requested some autumn work take place to improve this situation.

The Councils grass cutting contractors have been asked to provide a cost for weed spraying, scarifying and re-seeding. Members were advised this cost was below £1,000. Although members acknowledge a need to protect public money, the added costs to search out three separate quotations would negate any minor savings in the work.

RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Westlea Landscaping to carry out the work as previously agreed with the clerk.

² Responsible Financial Officer

056/20 **Adoption of Policy Documents – Volunteers**

This policy document had been previously shown to all members via e-mail due to the necessity of requiring the policy document urgently. Members had no objections during its e-mail consultation. The chairman thanked the clerk for producing this policy, it will be useful at any time volunteers help the Parish Council, not only for use in this COVID-19 pandemic which it was originally drawn up for.

RESOLVED to adopt this Policy Document for the use of when volunteers are working with the Parish Council on projects within the parish area.

057/20 **Area Board Boundary Review**

Following the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council there is a requirement to re-align some area boards in readiness for the May 2021 elections. A consultation on the proposed changes is underway until 31st October 2020. Members were reminded this consultation is open to any member of the public to make comments.

RESOLVED that the Council make no comment on this boundary review.

058/20 **Help with Administration for the Parish Hall**

A written report was received from the Parish Hall Trustees requesting a presence on the Council website.

Cllr Sharp presented the Parish Hall requirements, and was able to lead the discussion as he is chairman of the Parish Hall Trustees.

Discussion included:

- Trustees are aware new residents always look on Parish Council website to find out about booking hall and other community events
- Desire for Parish Hall Trustees and Parish Councillors to work more closely together for the benefit of residents
- Trustees request a larger presence on the Council website than they have at the present time
- Trustees are wishing to move their bookings to an electronic system, but do not currently have a website of their own
- Are there restrictions placed on content for a .gov website
- How would it affect the work of the webmaster
- Should all community groups have an equal presence on the website.

Officer Advice

- A .gov website can not be linked to a commercial site; the Parish Hall is a Charity Trust; any third party links must not advertise their name etc (bookings software).
- The website must be up to date with no broken links
- It is also a requirement that the website must be within the overall control of the Council, trustees should not have access to make any changes to the site, instead contacting the webmaster to make changes.
- As an alternative, the Parish Council is able to give a grant every year to pay for a separate domain name and website which can then be used by all community groups, or the parish hall alone.

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Chairman

RESOLVED to expand the Parish Council website to include all community groups. Each group will be invited to promote themselves, giving details of where and when their group meets and contact details for further assistance.

059/20 **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday 5th November 2020 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 9.51pm

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Chairman

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Chairman