

Little Oakley Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 13th February 2019

In the Millennium Room, St Michaels Church, Ramsey

Meeting Start Time 19.00

Present: Cllrs Griffiths (Chairman), Attrill, Bush, McNee, Griggs and Hunnaball

Also Present: County Cllr Erskine and Jeanette Sands (Clerk/RFO)

18/159

Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Cullen

It was **RESOLVED** to accept these.

Proposed: Cllr Hunnaball

Seconded: Cllr Attrill

18/160

Declaration of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests

No interests were declared.

18/161

Signing of the Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting and these were duly signed.

Proposed: Cllr Bush

Seconded: Cllr Attrill

18/162

Urgent Matters

Cllr Attrill advised that the street light opposite the bus stop at the bottom of Sea View Avenue (Harwich bound side) is blocked by the tree making it very dark and difficult for bus drivers to see people waiting at the bus stop. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would contact TDC and CC Cllr Bush with a request to have this trimmed back before leaves began to grow and block the light further. Two further lights were also being blocked by trees on Cherrytree Close and the corner of Cherrytree Close and Rectory Lane. It also appears the defibrillator is working again. Cllr Attrill offered to enquire into the defibrillator and also will check the trees to see what can be done and speak to the landlord of the Cherrytree Inn.

18/163

Clerks Report

Zebra Crossing – this is still ongoing, the relevant paperwork has been sent in. The Parish Council were advised that this is in the system for validation but it may be 6 to 10 weeks before we hear any decision.

Casual Vacancies – notices have gone up again in the noticeboards and they are on the website.

Bench for Playground – Earth Anchors are still the only company to quote for the bench. Cllr Hunnaball has offered to organise the concrete base for the bench and to fix it to the base. Cllr Hunnaball was thanked for his generous offer.

Replacing paving slab under playground gate – An email has been sent to the Memorial Club but no reply has been received to date. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will chase this up.

Oakridge Hedge – this has now been trimmed back

Hedge on Rectory Road – this has also been trimmed back

21 Mayes Lane Communal Waste Area – This has been queried and followed up, TDC have been in touch with the agents and they have been advised that if they wish to change this they will need to put in an application to make the changes. This item is still ongoing.

Planning Lodge Road – the date to put any comments by the Parish Council to TDC was before the meeting date so an extension had been applied for. The extension is until Friday 15th February.

Rent for Land near St Marys – This is still being looked into with regards to checking ownership and dates.

Playground Inspections – the offer to carry out the inspections by Chris Mayman has been withdrawn for various reasons. Cllr Griffiths recently looked at the playground equipment and gave a breakdown of some of the items which have minor problems. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would contact TDC to ask for details of companies able to carry out the repairs in order to have these carried out, if none are available then Playquip will be contacted. Also mentioned was that the double service gates at the playground are being blocked by a railing and screens used by the football club. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should look into this and contact LOFC if necessary.

18/164

Scout Group

An email has been received by the Clerk advising of the name change of the local Scout Group to also include Great Oakley and Ramsey. As a consequence of the name change the group are looking to purchase a new sign and flags and have asked if the Parish Councils would make a donation towards these costs. After a discussion it was agreed that a donation of £100 should be made. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should contact the Scout Group for payment details and the payment should be transferred to them at the end of the month.

Proposed: Cllr Hunnaball

Seconded: Cllr Griggs

18/165

Finance

Bank Account Balance as 1st February are

Current Account £662.35 this includes a bursary cheque for the Elections course attended by the Clerk.

Savings Account £22473.81

February's expenditure is £347.00. At the end of the month there will be £315.35 unallocated funds in the account, this will cover the direct debits leaving a balance of £198.35 therefore no transfer of funds from the savings account is necessary.

March expenditure is approximately £379.00

The Playground Inspection Company have emailed the dates of future operational inspections and the annual inspection. This is done on a rolling contract. The total cost for the year will be £258.00

A full copy of the Finance Report can be found at the end of the Minutes on the website.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payments for February

Proposed: Cllr Hunnaball

Seconded: Cllr Griggs

18/166

Planning

Determinations – Cllr Attrill advised that there were no determinations, also that TDC are asking if people will put back the date for their determinations.

21 Mayes Lane – one property changing a single garage to double is ongoing.

Applications – 19/00046/FUL 2 Lodge Road, 2 storey side extension, rear conservatory, single garage to side extension and new blocked paved drive. Having looked at the plans for the Application a decision of NEUTRAL was decided, however Councillors were concerned that at the rear of the property the garage wall is very close to the neighbours building. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would advise TDC Planning Dept of the decision and also mention the concern regarding the closeness of the garage to the wall of the neighbouring building.

Proposed: Cllr Attrill

Seconded: Cllr Griggs

18/167

Playing Field

Cllr Bush reported that at present there has been little movement forward with this and that now we have the run up to elections and purdah coming in there will be little going on for the moment. Cllr Bush advised that Active Essex has lottery money coming in to Colchester, Tendring and Basildon for this coming financial year.

18/168

Footpaths

Cllr Griggs reported that he had now measured most of the footpaths. Some of the footpaths are across fields and these are the responsibility of the farmer/landowner to keep cut. It was felt that the paths needing the extra cuts are at the top of the sea wall and the path at the back of the Cherrytree Inn to St Marys Church but again this is across farmland. The Essex Way was mentioned but this is cut by ECC. County Cllr Erskine spoke about the footpaths being part of the work being moved away from ECC to Parish Councils to undertake as part of devolution. It was felt that to undertake cutting back of footpaths would lead to needing a higher precept due to the extra costs incurred by Parish Councils. The Ramblers may be able to help with cutting the footpaths they use on a regular basis so this may be another option to look at. This item is still ongoing.

18/169

Police Special Constables

Cllr Bush reported back on the recent meeting held in Great Oakley to discuss the viability of having PSC's in the village and a meeting he attended at Weeley with the Police. PSC's are unpaid but have their travel expenses paid. Training takes 18 months and it is better to have someone local if possible as they are aware of the local community. There are some concerns that they are under a local police station closest to them and have to check in and out at the start and end of their time. Depending where they are based this can lead to a large amount of travel involved for them before and after their shift, plus they don't all have cars but at present this is all new and is being looked into. It was also noted that in an emergency they can be called back to the police station. Great Oakley PC are looking at having two PSC's and there could be a possibility of sharing costs with Little Oakley and Wix but Great Oakley would prefer to stay alone time wise. Cllr Attrill thought this was worth looking into. Cllr Bush mentioned that at present there are no costs involved but it would take time to put into action due to training time etc. If interested in taking on a PSC there is an application form which needs to be completed and then there is a list which the Parish Council will go onto. This item is ongoing and is to be discussed at the next meeting. Cllr Bush also told Councillors that a Community Policing team is being put back into the police station at Harwich.

18/170

Devolution of Highway Services to local Councils

The move to Parish Councils taking over the cutting back of footpaths after the first cut had already been discussed in 18/168. Other items being looked at for devolution are the clearing of ditches and potholes. Once again ditches like footpaths would come under farmers/landowners responsibility in some cases. It was felt that having to clear ditches and look after footpaths would probably result in some Parish Councils employing a handyman which again could lead to an increase in the precept. Potholes would be reported via the Clerk direct to the department concerned but no other road problems would be devolved to Parish Councils, i.e. white line painting. This item is still ongoing.

18/171

Meeting with Essex Police and Crime Commissioner

This has been dealt with under Minute 18/169

18/172

Report from District Councillor Bush

District Councillor Bush discussed the next litter pick for Little Oakley, this is on March 3rd starting at 10.30 at the Memorial Club followed by refreshments in the Scout Hut at the end. Cllr Griffiths mentioned that there are grants available to do with litter picking from NALC. District Cllr Bush has asked Catherine to put a budget together so that the Oakleys have their own equipment rather than having to pick up and take back to Weeley each time. District Cllr Bush also gave a talk to the local Cubs group about litter picking which they were very interested in especially going outside to try out the litter pickers. Cllr Griffiths thanked District Cllr Bush for his report.

18/173

Report from County Councillor Erskine

Some items regarding devolution had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. Library Consultation. County Cllr Erskine reported that this consultation ends in two weeks. The main outcome so far is to keep libraries open and many local communities are looking at how they can work with ECC to ensure this. Some libraries are in large buildings and may be able to be used by many community groups making more use of the building than just as a lending library. Other uses of the library also need to be taken into account, Cllr Bush mentioned looking at how many people use the library computers and also for company etc. Some villages are now setting up Community Libraries in village halls etc. Ramsey and Parkeston have a Community Library in their Memorial Club and Beaumont use their village hall for the same. However this is not suitable for all villages as some have no facilities where a library can be based.

Bus Consultation – this is still ongoing at present. Rural communities will suffer if bus services are cut back to every two hours. Fewer buses running in evenings and at weekends will also affect people who work shifts and use the bus to get to work. It was felt that by cutting bus services less people would use public transport. A discussion as to having a card system similar to the Oyster card would be useful. This could be used to collect data giving figures for the number of people using services, where they are travelling to and the times travelling. This would be more accurate data when looking at the use of services and any cutbacks required. Cllr Griffiths thanked County Cllr Erskine for his report.

18/174

Public Speaking

No members of the public attended.

18/175

Items for the next agenda.

Police and PSC's

Footpaths

Devolution of Highways

Litter picking

The meeting closed at 21.14

Current Account balance - 1st February	£662.35
Transfer from Savings	£0.00
Total Income for February	£662.35

Expenditure February 2019	
A & J Lighting D/D	£41.26
Hire of Hall	£20.00
SSE D/D	£63.75
1 & 1 Internet D/D	£11.99
Wages - Clerks wages	£200.00
TDALC Subscription (Cheque)	£10.00
Total expenditure	£347.00
Total in Main Account end of February	£315.35

Saving Account balance - 1st February	£22,473.81
Income into Savings Account February	£0.00
Outgoings form Savings Account February	£0.00

Total in Savings Account end of February	£22,473.81
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Overall total in Current and Savings account	£22,789.16
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Proposed Expendiure for March	
A & J Lighting D/D	£41.26
Hire of Hall	£20.00
SSE D/D (approx)	£63.75
Clerks Wages	£200.00
1 & 1 Internet D/D	£11.99
Clerks Expenses (mileage and parking Cilca)	£42.00
Total Proposed Expenditure	£379.00

Reserves

Playground	£5,022.00
Website	£860.00
Street Lights	£500.00
Office Equipment	£500.00
Chairmans Discretionary Fund	£500.00
Total Reserves	£7,382.00

Unallocated Funds Available

Current Account	-£63.65
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Savings Account	£15,091.81
Total Unallocated Funds Available	£15,028.16