



Loddon Parish Council

The Library Annexe | Church Plain | Loddon | NR14 6EX

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Minutes of The Annual Meeting of Loddon Parish held on Wednesday 14 April 2021 at 7.00pm held remotely via 'GoTo Meeting'

Present:

Chairman of Loddon Parish Council: June Strickland

Council: Kay Mason-Billig, Arthur Morris, Jane Hale, Sophie Waggett, Mervyn Pointer, Stephen Jones, Margaret Wallace, Michael Martins

Loddon Town Estate Charity: Ann Lumley

Loddon & Chedgrave Playing Field Committee: Colin Gould

In Attendance: Emily Curtis (Parish Clerk), Georgina Hirst, (Responsible Finance Officer, RFO), and three members of the public.

Absent: Alan Wildman, Jeremy Rowe.

The Chairman asked everyone to join her observing a minute's silence to mark the occasion of the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh on Friday April 9 2021.

1. Apologies for Absence

David Tarry, Barry Stone.

2. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 11 April 2019

There was no Annual Parish Meeting held in 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2019 were **APPROVED** as a correct record with no amendments.

3. Chairman's Annual Report:

June Strickland

Obviously, it has been a difficult and unusual year, what with the Pandemic and the changes in staffing. Emily joined us last March just prior to the 1st lockdown, what a time to start! And even with the challenges that brought, with help from the locum clerk, Anne, has reorganised the office and gradually cleared out a lot of old stuff that was no longer needed.

We are also restructuring the office staffing, for greater efficiency with an additional member which we have recently advertised and will be assessing the applications within the next week couple of weeks.

As you may remember we used the last Plaque for the Freedom of Loddon Award which was purchased by Dorothy Jones when she was a councillor. Philip Taylor from the Kings head has kindly helped secure the future of the Freedom of Loddon Award by offering a generous annual donation.

We have secured the future of the information centre for next year in the Library.

We have adopted 30 streetlights from SNC and replaced with LED lanterns to save 80% electricity supply costs.

We have several very active Working Parties, working hard to make improvements to Parish facilities and I would like to thank all the councillors who have participated in these.

We have secured the lease on the Library Annexe, and are looking forward to repairing the building for the benefit of the community.

Thanks to all the volunteers and support this year;

- The Councillors for all their hard work
- Carole and Bernard Webb for tree plaque installation
- Gary Allard for restoring the Staithe wooden Notice Board
- Patrick Webster for renovating Pyes Mill Notice Board
- Sophie, Larry and Brian Webb for planting the flower towers and watering throughout the year.
- The households and businesses that provide power to the Christmas lights
- Loddon Swan for donating the Christmas tree

Looking ahead, hopefully the roundabout is soon to be built and SNC have taken ownership of Staithe Bridge, so hopeful that progress will be made with restoration works.

4a County Councillor

Report circulated by Barry Stone.

Norfolk County Council highlights for 2020/21

Norfolk Statistics

- 6,200 miles of highway, 3,000 miles of footway, 5,000 bridges and structures and 53,000 streetlights across Norfolk (40% of which are environmentally friendly LED)
- 98.0% of highway inspections completed within timescale
- 99% of dangerous highway defects dealt with within timescales set out in the Transport Asset Management Plan
- 227,000 tonnes of rubbish dealt with
- 52,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for 20,000 people
- Under 1,000 Looked After Children (LAC) (0-17yrs population)
- 95% of Norfolk homes have superfast broadband coverage

The 2021/21 Budget

A **£439 million** net revenue budget, a **£102 million** boost for roads and infrastructure and a 3.99 per cent Council Tax rise has been agreed to support communities, the economy and the environment across the County.

Further, there will be an investment of **£45.7m** to meet cost and other pressures in services, including **£28.2m** in adult social care, **£7m** in children's services and **£10.5m** in community and environmental services.

Within the investment of **£102m** in the capital program, taking the total infrastructure program to **£537.66m**, these include **£11.5m** for supported housing for young adults, **£4m** for children's residential homes and investment in the Long Stratton bypass and new libraries. Additionally there will be an investment of **£2m** to respond to flooding, including an additional **£350k** in revenue budget provision, **£235k** in highways spending to reduce road flooding risks and **£1.5m** for the creation of a new flood reserve to fund urgent works and repairs.

New service from Norfolk Libraries helped families learn from home

Families that were struggling with home learning have a new place to turn to for advice and support. Norfolk Libraries has set up a phone line which serves as a first stop for parents and carers in the county using new devices to teach their children.

The phone line aims to provide a friendly voice to families that aren't familiar with home learning technology, including those that have received a new laptop or tablet as a result of Norfolk County Council's 'Every Child Online' campaign.

Norfolk libraries has scrapped late fees for children as part of post-pandemic reading push

Norfolk County Council has agreed have agreed ambitious plans for the Norfolk Libraries and Information service to improve children and young people's reading skills which have been diminished nationally as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes the removal of overdue charges for everyone under the age of 16, universal membership of the county's e-library through Norfolk's schools and the introduction of a new '1000 books before school' reading challenge.

Norfolk participating in new contact tracing scheme

Norfolk County Council is to oversee all Covid contact tracing in the county, building on the county's successful work to identify close contacts of those who have tested positive for the virus. The "Local-0" scheme will see cases passed without delay to local tracers at the same time as an individual who tested positive for coronavirus is invited to complete the online contact information. The current approach passes cases from the national NHS Test & Trace taskforce onto local tracers only after the national team has been unable to make contact over a period of 24 hours. In the seven days between 9th and 16th January there were 4,029 confirmed cases, but between 7th and 13th March this had reduced to 351, which is below the UK average.

Every Child Online campaign launched

A new campaign which aims to ensure every school age child has a digital device and internet connection to learn remotely at home was launched. Norfolk County Council has been working with Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) on the campaign backed by the EDP newspaper to make sure no child is left behind in their learning because of digital disadvantage. The county council has already co-ordinated the sourcing, prioritisation, and distribution of over 5,000 laptops and tablets, either directly to youngsters or to their schools.

Major highway improvement schemes started in 2021

A multi-million pound programme of road maintenance continued into 2021 with major schemes getting underway in Great Yarmouth, Downham Market and Stalham. The improvements have been made possible thanks to the £22m highway funding for Norfolk that the Department for Transport announced in May 2020, to fund schemes in the 2020-21 financial year. Norfolk received more than any other local authority in the East of England for maintenance and repairs to the county's roads, bridges, pavements and cycle paths. At £1.2m the mechanical and electrical upgrades for the 90-year-old Haven Bridge in Great Yarmouth is the largest scheme to be funded as part of the £22m programme. Some upgrade works were completed in the autumn, but other work, which will resolve many of the issues caused by the lifting bridge's ageing equipment, started in February and is expected to take 13 weeks to complete. The £22m funding award is in addition to Norfolk County Council's existing highways capital maintenance budget of £38.6m for the year 2020-2021.

Surge of Beryl Bike rides in 2020 as Norwich pedals to greener future

With over 11,000 riders, close to 70,000 trips and 266,303 kilometres ridden on Beryl Bikes this year, Norwich can boast to being a greener place for residents and visitors throughout 2020.

Beryl, the local bikeshare provider, has played a large role in the area's transport habits last year, helping NHS and key workers take essential trips during the first national lockdown, easing pressure on public transport and providing the wider public with an affordable and convenient way to get from A to B. The 68,900 trips taken by Beryl Bike are equivalent to 43.92 tonnes of CO2 saved.

Also in 2020, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, Beryl became the world's first provider of a city-wide multimodal smart fleet including pedal bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters.

This choice of vehicles provided residents of Norwich with a chance to take a variety of journeys in a safe, sustainable and convenient way.

Norfolk hits top spot for second year running in road and transport survey

For the second year running Norfolk has come first among its peers in a national highways and transport survey. Over the summer 3,300 people in Norfolk were asked for their views on topics such as road safety, highway maintenance, congestion and public transport as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey 2020. The results are ranked against other participating councils from across the country to give a nationwide picture of how Norfolk is performing. Out of the 29 county councils and larger unitary authorities in the peer group, Norfolk secured the top spot for overall satisfaction and saw the highest above average scores in both satisfaction with 'traffic levels and congestion' and 'condition of highways'.

Norfolk Flooding Alliance created

In response to winter flooding seen across the County, the Norfolk Flooding Alliance has been created. Led by Lord Dannatt and including bodies such as District Councils, Anglian Water, the Environmental Agency, internal drainage boards, along with Norfolk County Council, the challenges posed across the County can be addressed and tackled.

Housing boost for people with disabilities

One hundred and eighty-one supported housing units are set to be developed in Norfolk, to help people with disabilities live more independent lives. The County Council will seek to invest £9m-£18m of capital to develop supported, adapted and specialist housing over the next 10 years, to improve people's lives, reduce hospital admissions and reduce care costs by £1.9m per year.

Grant scheme launched to provide free expert advice and cash to help businesses 'Go Digital'

A new grant scheme launched last December will enabled micro, small and medium-sized businesses to make better use of digital technology through funding and one to one support. Go Digital was launched by Norfolk County Council to help businesses based in the county identify digital opportunities. It will provide expert one-to-one consultancy and the ability to apply for grants of up to £500. Digital opportunities included how to sell products and services online, reach new customers using social media, build customer databases, develop new or existing websites and attract new visitors, or how to work out the best homeworking options for teams.

More vulnerable children in Norfolk supported to remain with their families

A £12-£15 million five-year programme to transform support for children and young people enabled more youngsters to remain with their families. National statistics reveal the number of children looked after by Norfolk County Council's Children's Social Care was lower, per 10,000 children than that of England (64 vs 67).

Norfolk Library Service awarding funding to help with Census

Norfolk Library Service has been awarded £53k to deliver support for people in Norfolk needing to access the first ever online Census, amounting to one of the largest single contracts from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Children in care gets below the 1000 barrier

The current numbers of children in care are down to 994, this is from a high of 1200 just over 12 months ago. This has been achieved by working better and closer with families, to keep children in their family unit and is part of our transformation program. This is a far better outcome for the children and with Average costs for a child in care at £50,000/annum savings

are made. The full savings (200 x 50) haven't been fully realised because the unit costs of our children remaining are on the higher side but this does indicate the impact children in care have on the budget. We have also increased our in house fostering meaning we use less agency places where again significant savings are with the difference being around £1000/month.

First look at new Norwich recycling centre as it takes shape

Construction of one of two new recycling centres for the Greater Norwich area is well underway as pictures taken in early March show. A 300 tonne crane is currently on site at the new £2.75m Norwich North recycling centre as sections of what will be a 500,000 litre tank, an integral part of the comprehensive water management system on site, are maneuvered into place. This tank is the largest of its kind at any of Norfolk's recycling centres and will ensure any surface water runoff stays within the site. Work on the major project started late last year, and includes a new access road to the recycling centre, which is located on land off the A140/A1270 junction near the airport.



4b District Councillor

A verbal report was given by Kay Mason-Billig.

4c Loddon Town Estate Charity

The Covid-19 pandemic meant that 2020 was a year like no other in living memory. The charity was expecting to be needed more than ever. Surprisingly, however, grant applications have been very low again despite the hard work to increase the charity's profile within the community. In addition to various advertising initiatives and constant reminders in the locality, the co-ordinator of the local help hub of volunteers was contacted, as well as the headteachers of the schools in Loddon. As the financial effect of the pandemic bites I trust that people in need will call upon us for assistance.

From an income perspective, the charity had a successful year. Not only were there increased donations, it was also the recipient of a bequest. These are greatly appreciated and every penny will help the charity in its efforts to assist those in need within the community.

4d Loddon & Chedgrave Playing Field Committee

The committee met virtually 3 times throughout the year. The main focus has been the aspirations of the Loddon United Football Club. The Committee discussed the feasibility of partitioning off the football pitches so as to help with the maintenance of the surface and

deter incursion by vehicles. We rejected the proposal but have installed bollards at the Hall end and Kittens Lane to deter vehicles from driving on the field and Saffron have installed a low post and rail fence to improve security. The tennis courts have not been used and so there has been a loss of income. The use of the courts was raised by the football club asking for the surface to be changed into a multi-use games area to afford a training area for the football club. They were tasked with obtaining a business plan for the scheme. Work has progressed with clearing up the trees around the court and removing ivy etc from the side fencing.

At its latest meeting 31.3.21, the committee agreed to support the installation of 6 CCTV cameras on the Jubilee Hall to help with security of the Hall and surveillance of the field, skatepark, Children's Play area, tennis court, hall and Hockey Field. The PFC has obtained a grant from the Lawn Tennis Association to improve the booking system and court locks thus making the court booking much easier to manage.

The LUFC also proposed to ask the PFC for an undertaking to back their application for a grant from the Football Association to improve the pitches on both the main field and Hockey Field. The LUFC can obtain a £30K grant but have to find another £15K payable over 6 years. The LUFC said that they would be able pay £7500 and asked for an undertaking that the PFC would match fund. The PFC agreed subject to the LUFC making funding grants. Future projects will be the updating of the Constitution and PFC representatives.

4e Loddon & Chedgrave Jubilee Hall Management Committee

On behalf of the board of trustees -Alex Bridge, Acting Chairman

At the current time the JHMC consists of 6 trustee's and employs a centre manager, a secretary and a cleaner.

Accountant: Headspace Accountancy Ltd, 2 Yarmouth Road, Hales, Norfolk, NR14 6SP

Objectives

The charity provides and maintains a community hall to be used for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation, with the objective of improving the condition of life for the inhabitants of the parishes of Loddon and Chedgrave.

Review of activities

We are grateful to the local inhabitants who provide income which ensures the hall can run efficiently and costs to the service user are kept to a minimum. The hall was closed March-July due to Covid 19 and again December-April 2021. The Hall received a grant from South Norfolk Council which has kept the hall running during this time.

Bookings have been adequate, Farmers Market and Tumble Tots both disbanded over the past year so the hall has lost these bookings. We have gained slimming world and some extra badminton bookings. The gym remained closed through 2020 but is reopening next week. The taproom is run by Brad Pike and has been open as and when government regulations allow. LUFC has been closed since March 2020 and are not planning on returning till July 2021.

The hall purchased a shipping container for storage, this was partly funded by the Parish Council and the rest was raised by the Hall.

Issues

The hall continues to have issues with youths on the patio smashing glass, drug taking and climbing onto the roof of the clubroom and containers. We hope the proposed CCTV will help with this when it is in place.

Future plans

The charity is currently fund raising for an improvement project which will provide good disabled access in the main hall. The JHMC are currently getting quotes to repair the clubroom fire exit door and change an existing window into a patio door for clubroom access. Many fundraising bookings were cancelled due to Covid-19 so there are plans to get these booked back in to raise money for the hall.

4f Loddon Allotment Society

The invitation to contribute was politely declined.

5 Public Forum

A member of the public thanked local Councils for their Covid-19 support.

6. Date of the Next Meeting

Annual Meeting of the Parish - Wednesday 13 April 2022 at 7.00pm.

The meeting ended at 7.20pm.