

Minutes of the Ridgmont Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 11th March 2021 starting at 7.30pm.

In line with emergency Coronavirus Government Legislation, the Parish Council will not be holding face to face meetings for the foreseeable future. This virtual meeting is being held via Zoom Conference facilities.

Present: Cllrs M Spearing – Chairman, P Fewings, H Francis, P Francis, R Kemeny and Lyn Lyman – Clerk. No residents were present.

In attendance: CB Cllrs S Clark, K Matthews & R Morris.

393. To Receive apologies for absence:

No apologies received.

Cllrs H & P Francis were congratulated on the imminent birth of their baby.

394. Declaration of Members' Interests:

a) **Declaration of member's interest of a non-pecuniary nature:** (Having membership of a club, charity etc or a close relationship):

Cllr H Francis: PCC Secretary & Treasurer, Representative on All Saints Church and Trustee on Ridgmont Charity;

Cllr P Francis: PCC and Trustee on Ridgmont Charity.

Cllr M Spearing: Trustee of The Greensand Trust and PCC; Governor of Aspley Guise School and Parish Council representative on Ridgmont Charity.

b) **Declaration of members' interest of a pecuniary nature:** (Having a financial bearing on a member or their spouse/partner):

Cllr Spearing and Mr Nicholas Spearing: Land Owner

395. Parish Councillor Vacancies (2):

Following the uncontested election, there are vacancies for two Parish Councillors. Every effort is to be made to fill the vacancies.

An article is also to be included on the Whats App group which was set up to assist with Covid 19. And another on the Ridgmont Facebook page. This is ongoing. **Action: MS**

396. Open Forum:

Residents will have the chance to raise anything relevant to Parish Council business but they will not be able to discuss the subject more than once. A maximum of 2 minutes per subject will be allowed.

No issues raised.

397. To Approve Minutes of the previous meeting:

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th November 2020. They will be signed when possible.

398. **To discuss Matters Arising:**

No issues raised.

401. **To receive Reports:**

CB Cllr Clark: reported that after discussions with residents and CBC Highways Officers, traffic cones on High Street have been organised and are now in place. This is to stop visitors from parking, leaving their cars and going for walks.

She has been in contact with the Safari Park to see if they will remove some of the logs and arrange for verge grass cutting. The alternative is double yellow lines which CBC is reluctant to do.

Could the Safari Park consider opening the Safari Park gates and let cars park just inside although they wouldn't do it last time. Woburn car park has re-opened. It is hoped that things will go back to normal soon.

Consultation about East West Rail to start soon and will last 12 weeks. This will be on the Marston Vale line upgrade in order to deliver a full service between Oxford/Cambridge. It is envisaged there will be 4 trains an hour (in addition to the usual Bletchley/Bedford service). Upgrade of track and possible closures of some crossings.

Marston Vale Development Brief is out for consultation at present. It is an important document where as many responses as possible should be sent.

CB Cllr Matthews: CB Cllr Matthews had nothing to add.

CB Cllr Morris: Ridgmont Parish Council were mentioned in the full council meeting last week. Ward Cllr J Baker (Woburn & Aspley Guise Ward) asked a written question, regarding use of Ward Cllr Grants by Ridgmont Parish Council. CBC had unanimously agreed his allegations were unsubstantiated and unfounded.

All Ward Cllrs were thanked for all that they have been doing.

Councillor Reports:

Planning Applications: CB/21/00689/Reg3. Ridgmont Lower School. Retention of one single classroom temporary unit. It was unanimously agreed the Parish Council support this application.

Ridgmont School: No decision has been made on the future site.

PCC: Cllr H Francis spoke of the financial situation of the church. A 100 Club has successfully been set up with draws taking place every quarter.

Rev Graham Bradshaw is moving to Scotland. His last service will be held on Easter Sunday at St Botolphs, Aspley Guise.

The PCC had written to the Diocese to ascertain the future of the churches in the benefice (Aspley Guise, Husborne Crawley and Ridgmont). The Arch Deacon of Bedford had responded advising that plans have not been finalised, but it looks like the three churches will join together with

Woburn Sands to form a new benefice. They want a meeting with the PCC to look at the future. There will be no imminent closure of Ridgmont Church.

Ridgmont Charity: The AGM has still not been held.

Marston Vale Development Brief: Cllr Spearing has read the 100 page document and will circulate her comments. The plan is for 5,000 houses in the Marston Vale. What can we do to make it the best all round for the area? This is not a planning application, it is a Development Brief which requires responding to.

Action: MS

South East Milton Keynes Plan is also being considered.

399. **To receive correspondence:**

A resident has suggested that once Covid 19 Restrictions have been lifted it would be lovely to have another Street Party, she also thought it would help the pub and the café and boost moral. It was agreed this was a really nice idea but felt that there was an expectancy for the Parish Council to finance and organise it. Although the Parish Council supports the idea, they agreed it was not a good idea to take forward group meetings following Covid 19 rulings. Cllr Spearing agreed to respond to the resident.

Action: MS

A resident is concerned about the tree destruction which has been carried out at the Old Vicarage, especially as residents are living in a Conservation Area. She would like something to be published about the situation. Cllr Spearing has looked into this and has been advised that The Vicarage was given permission to do the work and had followed all correct procedures. The trees concerned were not healthy trees and were in fact quite dangerous. There is another tree which is in question and depending what the Arboriculturalist says this may have to go too.

Andy Muskett thinks it is about time the remaining mercury type street lights should be upgraded as these types of lights have been obsolete for 7 years and spare parts are becoming quite rare. He did raise this some time ago. He will send through details of some options in the near future. The budget will be checked.

Facebook:

- there have been complaints about dog walkers not picking up after their dogs.
- it would be appreciated if the village entrance gates could be repainted. The gates were repainted a little while ago so maybe a good wash will smarten them up again.
- The woodland area behind The Firs down to Lydds Hill: there is a lot of rubbish being dumped on the hill/valley. There appears to be more there now than there has ever been.

Action: MS

Action: MS

400. **To accept Payments:**

Balance as at 26th February 2021: £3,384.20

Income: £187.01

Expenditure:

Aragon Land Planning Local Plan Representation		1,248.00	100748
NAB Grasscutting September		530.00	100749a
NAB Grasscutting November		530.00	100749b
HMRC PAYE		256.20	100750
Andy Muskett Ltd 2 nd ¼ Street lighting Maintenance		110.10	100751a
Andy Muskett Ltd 3 rd ¼ Street Lighting Maintenance		110.10	100751b
Bedford Estates Recreation Ground Rental		20.00	100752
Andy Muskett Ltd 4 th ¼ Street Lighting Maintenance		110.10	100753
Mrs Lyman Annual Website Cost		98.86	100754
Mrs Lyman Clerks salary – December	371.05	357.55	s/o
Mrs Lyman Clerks salary – January	371.05	357.55	s/o
Mrs Lyman Clerks salary – February	371.05	357.55	s/o
Mrs Lyman Clerks salary – March	371.05	357.55	s/o
Eon – December Monthly Energy Charge		166.62	d/d
Eon – January Monthly Energy Charge		172.18	d/d

Eon – February Monthly Energy Charge	172.18	d/d
Eon – March Monthly Energy Charge	155.52	d/d
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	4,999.96	

Of the above invoices, £4,210.69 has been paid which leaves balance in the bank of £789.27

402. **Local Plan Update:**

Cllr Spearing attended the hearing sessions where the Marston Gate SE2 was discussed. The Inspectors were concerned about landscape and heritage properties. (Green Sand Ridge and Segenhoe Manor). Various representations were put forward. Ridgmont was very well represented. The Inspectors have written back to CBC with their recommendations - To reduce the height, to reduce the impact on the heritage aspect and Greensand Ridge.

There appears to be differing of views on reading the letter. CBC has sent back their modifications to the Inspectors by removing Zone 3. Historic England will not think this is acceptable. Standing on The Round House and Ring Works this will significantly affect the views. The council needed to demonstrate how they minimise the harm.

CBC doesn't know whether the developer will persist with their application with Zone 3 having been taken out. The intention of CBC just to remove the rising ground area, will have to go out to consultation. Need to see what the Inspectors say now. It is not known how long this will all take possibly until the Autumn. The Inspectors did not make comments about Marston Vale.

The fruit farm is a 200 year old building. If it was listed would it have any effect?

Historic England has objected all the way through. Just removing Zone 3 will not make them change their minds.

No apparent comment about M1 Junction 13. If applications go ahead, it will increase traffic movements greatly. The junction is over-capacity now. This needs resolving before the planning application is submitted.

The John Bunyan trail goes all the way to the Ring Works.

Cllr Spearing has been in touch with Brogborough Parish Council. It is not actually known who owns The Round House. Eugene Ghent is portfolio holder for assets at CBC as they may be the owners since when the property burnt out many years ago. The Round House/Ring Works history goes back to the Civil War so the area is steeped with history.

Cllr Spearing, CB Cllr Clark and Cllr Moss (Brogborough Parish Council) had recently walked up to the Roundhouse and Ring Works. They climbed the mound and enjoyed the excellent view. Any further warehousing will impact on the view.

403. **Section 106 Play Equipment:**

Lappset/Redlynch quote for safety surfacing is £8,936 + VAT.

The cable on the walkway could do with being replaced - the cost of the cable is £350 and £175.00 for fitting.

We have Section 106 funding of £7,603.63. Lappset/Redlynch has suggested the payments could be paid in two halves.

Both CB Cllrs Matthews and Morris had completed their forms to allow £1,500 from Council funding. Nothing has been received to date. We should contact Victoria Smith at CBC to find out what the delay is. They may be waiting for invoices for the work. *Action: MS*

404. Resignation of Clerk:

Earlier in the year, due to personal circumstances, Mrs Lyman had resigned as Clerk. She would like to carry out a successful handover to her successor. Lyn was thanked for her hard work and leadership.

The vacancy has been advertised but to date no responses have been received. It was agreed to advertise the vacancy on Ridgmont Facebook.

It was suggested that Cllr Spearing speak to surrounding Clerks to see if they may be interested in joining Ridgmont. Cllr Spearing will also speak to Brian Dunleavy at CBC as CBC may have to provide an interim clerk if there is no interest. *Action: MS*

405. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 2nd April 2021. The Annual Parish Meeting will be at 7.15 and will be followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting. Format will be through Zoom facilities.

The Meeting closed at 8.55pm.