

LACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING No 2 (Second Monday in October)

PARISH COUNCILLORS NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Lackford Parish Councillors are called upon to attend a meeting of the Council that will take place on Monday 09 October 2017 at 7:30pm in Lackford Church.

John F. Sadler – Clerk to the Council

Councillors called to attend

Steve Jones (Chairman)

Stan Green (Vice-Chairman)

Harry Lidster

Colin Smith

Jan Betley

Naomi Palmer

Roland van Wijk

Notice also sent to

Rebecca Hopfensperger (County Councillor)

Susan Glossop (Borough Councillor)

Safer Neighbourhood Team

Apologies for absence received

Statutory matters

The Chairman to ascertain that the statutory requirements for holding the meeting have been observed, there is a quorum (*minimum 2 for the APM and 3 for the Council meeting*), and to determine if any Councillors wish to declare an interest in any matters on the Agenda

Apologies for absence not already received

AGENDA

1. **To review the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council held Monday, 09 May 2017 (the Annual Parish Meeting will be offered for approval at the next Parish Meeting)**
 - 1.1. **Parish Councillors to review the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting.**
 - 1.2. **A proposal is required to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting**
 - ❖ **Proposal to approve the minutes**
Seconded by
Council members to approve the proposal

If approved the Chairman to sign the minutes
 - 1.3. **Matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda**
2. **The Chairman, if he deems appropriate, will invite registered electors of the Parish attending the meeting, to speak on matters of concern or for information only. (Note: the Parish Council cannot make decisions on any matter not on the agenda)**
3. **Community Safety**
 - 3.1. **Matters for the Safer Neighbourhood Team**
 - 3.2. **Other Community Safety Matters -**

4. Matters by or for the County and Borough Councillors.

4.1. Report from Rebecca Hopfensperger (County Councillor)

Report from Susan Glossop (Borough Councillor)

4.1.1. The proposal for a single council for West Suffolk

4.2. Matters for the County & Borough Councillors

4.2.1. The Road Safety review of the A1101 - Rebecca Hopfensperger is invited to provide an update on the consultation process that by now should be out for consultation.

5. Matters previously discussed - for report and/or for the Councils further consideration

5.1. Speed Activated Road Sign - the Chairman to provide an update to Council.

5.2. Street lighting - an update to be given by the Clerk.

5.3. Outstanding engineering works by Suffolk County Council - an update to be given by the Clerk on the following matters raised at his meeting with Suffolk County Council engineer Anthony Smith and Rebecca Hopfensperger.

- **Increase the effective width of the A1101 through the village** - This may be achieved by cutting back the overgrown hedging and trees along the South side of the A1101 to at least 1 m behind the verge line. This is a very narrow section of the main road with a long bend. This essential work will enable large vehicles, travelling in a westerly direction, to travel closer to the verge, without the risk of clashing wing mirrors with oncoming traffic. It might also allow east going traffic to stop hugging the curb, with the inherent danger this poses to pedestrians using the narrow footpath.

Ideally, for the safety of pedestrians and vehicles, this main road should, be widened to accommodate the size and quantity of the traffic it takes.

- **Subsided foundation to manhole cover** - this is situated just before the turning into Old Bury Road heading east.
- **Subsided road gullies along the A1101.**
- **Blocked drainage and a broken section of pipe** - West of Post Office Cottage in Old Bury Road, discovered by camera during the jetting process.
- **Flooding across Old Bury Road**, adjacent to Kent Road, due to inadequate drainage from the roadside ditches to the main surface water system.
- **Completion of skirting back to the South side of Old Bury Road East of Post Office Cottage** - repair the surface of the road uncovered by the initial skirt back to allow this previously hidden section of the road to be used. This is essential to stop West going traffic in Old Bury Road from moving into the centre of the road, thereby causing oncoming traffic, particularly buses, onto the grass verge on the North side of the road, which gets churned up and turns into a muddy quagmire during the winter.
- **Install 4 marker posts** - in the grass verge on the north side of Old Bury Road between "Virginia Cottage" and "Lane Side" - these are necessary to prevent vehicles driving over the grass verge caused by oncoming traffic in the middle of the road, as described above.
- **Skirt back east end of the splay where Old Bury Road meets the A1101-**
- **Clear curb drainage to the East end of Old Bury Road on both sides of the splay.** This drainage should take the bulk of the water coming off the A1101, which now runs down Old Bury Road in a westerly direction, aggravating the flooding and the overloaded drainage system.
- **Potholes and the general surface of the first half of Kent Road.**

6. Matters that have arisen since the previous meeting and not already considered including matters arising from correspondence circulated or forwarded by e-mail

- 6.1. Donation by the Parish Council to Suffolk Wildlife Trust following the purchase of Philip Aitkens field, now to be known as "Lackford Green"** - a limited donation can be made under the power of Section 137 (3) for charities. The Financial statements for year ending 31st March 2017, allocated a reserve of £2905.93 for village amenities.
- 6.2. Dog fouling** -
- 6.3. Letter of complaint** - a letter of complaint was received by the Chairman from Geoffrey Milton. The matter was dealt with by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman who consider the matter closed.

7. Planning - to review applications since the last meeting and other planning matters

The table below summarises the status and movements in planning applications since the last meeting.

Planning						
Planning - Application No	Proposal	Location	Applicant	Comments	Planning Granted	Planning Refused
17/1616/HH	Extension and conversion of an outbuilding & link extension to rear of property	2 Flint Cottage Bury Road Lackford IP28 6HW	Mr T Holder & Miss H Murray		Yes	No

8. Financial matters

- 8.1. Payments** - a proposal is required to approve the following payments already paid or due. *(Approval in principle for the sums was given when the Budget for the current year was agreed)*

Date	Name	Details	Power	Amounts	Total
18/05/17	SALC <i>(already paid)</i>	Internal audit Recoverable VAT	S111	135.00 27.00	162.00
02/10/17	Came & Company <i>(already paid)</i>	Insurance for year commencing 11/10/2017 with Ecclesiastical	S111	266.00	266.00
01/10/17	Cortina Construction Limited <i>(already paid)</i>	Parish Clerk (Oct-Mar as budget) Office rent (Oct-Mar as budget) Contribution for internet costs (Oct-Mar as budget) Expenses (01/04/16 - 30/09/16) Recoverable VAT	S111	1313.00 52.50 72.50 255.85 338.77	2032.62
01/10/17	Mrs M J Macintosh <i>(already paid)</i>	Footpath licence	S111	2.50	2.50
01/10/17	Mrs F E Rigby <i>(already paid)</i>	Footpath licence	S111	2.50	2.50
	St. Edmundsbury Borough Council <i>(awaiting invoice)</i>	Grass maintenance Recoverable VAT	S111	Not to exceed budget of £200	

- ❖ **Proposal to approve**
Seconded by
Council members to approve the proposal

- 8.2. Payment authority for the above - to be signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman or other Councillor**

8.3. Budget reconciliation April to October

(The following reconciliation includes the items in the table of payments already paid or due)

Details	Budget Reconciliation at 02 October 2017		
	Actual to date	Budget to October	Variance
Receipts			
Precept	6000.00	6000.00	
Grants	1283.60		1283.60
Interest Savings a/c			
Other receipts			
Discounts received			
Receipts	7283.60	6000.00	1283.60
Administration Payments			
Parish Clerk	2626.00	2626.00	
Office rent - Clerk	105.00	105.00	
Internet contribution - Clerk	145.00	145.00	
Admin expense - Clerk	348.55	280.00	68.55
Room hire for meetings	200.00	200.00	
Internal Audit	135.00	135.00	
External Audit			
Insurance	266.00	300.00	-34.00
SALC - including subscription	131.97	135.00	-3.03
Training		100.00	-100.00
Publications & subscriptions		50.00	-50.00
Bank charges & Interest paid			
Election costs			
Other - Admin payments		150.00	-150.00
Administration Payments	3957.52	4226.00	-268.48
Other Payments			
Churchyard maintenance	250.00	250.00	
LCC - village services	370.00	370.00	
Grass cutting SEBC			
Footpath Licences	5.00	5.00	
Other - Other payments		150.00	-150.00
Section 137 Payments - (2017 £5.57 per elector)		500.00	-500.00
Other Payments	625.00	1275.00	-650.00
Receipts less Payments	2701.08	499.00	2202.08

- 8.4. Insurance renewal** - the three-year long-term agreement with Aviva has now expired. The Council's insurance brokers Came & Company obtained three quotations for the coming year commencing 11 October 2017. The quotations were from, Inspire at £280 including IPT, Hiscox at £294 including IPT and Ecclesiastical at £280 including IPT. The brokers' recommendation is that the Ecclesiastical policy is the most appropriate for this Council. They also offer a three-year long-term agreement with a 5% discount that will ensure the annual premium can be maintained. The Clerk/RFO has accepted the recommendation of the broker. This is in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

9. Internal & External audits and Annual Return**9.1. Internal audit**

SALC carried out the internal audit, six recommendations were made. The internal audit report from SALC was initially forwarded to Councillors on 26 May 2017, with the Clerk's observations and request for some help in putting the recommendations into practice.

A meeting between the Clerk and the auditor took place on 09 August where the matters were discussed. The auditor promised to write as a follow-up to the meeting, but no letter has been received. Consequently, the Clerk appends his interpretation of the matters as discussed at the meeting, together with a review set out below each recommendation.

The following recommendations shall be reviewed by Council. *(The numbering relates to the subject matter in the internal audit)*

- 9.1.1. 2. Payment controls** - The recommendation is "that whilst Council complies

with its own Financial Regulation 4.1 and minutes that payment authority has been signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, such authority (signed) should be retained within the Council's records for a clear audit trail. Council should also ensure that all invoices / requests for payment against which payment has been made are retained within the Council's files to ensure a clear audit trail of the smaller authority's financial transactions"

The auditor acknowledged that each payment authority and every invoice had been included within the documentation provided, and that there was a clear audit trail from budget to bank statement. Therefore, the Clerk's view is that no further action is required.

- 9.1.2. **3. Standing Orders** - The recommendation is "that the Council's current Standing Orders are reviewed against the NALC Standing Orders noting that the model standing orders in bold type should not be ignored or substantively amended unless the legislation out of which they are born changes. It is recommended that the Council adopts the model standing orders in bold type in their current form because these reflect statutory requirements"

In December 2016, Council amended the Standing Orders to reflect current legislation as recommended by SALC. On checking the existing against the current model regulations all standing orders in bold type have been included unless they are not, or ever likely to be, relevant to the Council. Therefore, the Clerk's view is that no further action is required.

- 9.1.3. **3. Financial Regulations** - The recommendation is "that the Council's current Financial Regulations are reviewed against the NALC Model Financial Regulations with particular reference to the items mentioned above"

As above, in December 2016, Council amended the Financial Regulations to reflect current legislation as recommended by SALC. On checking the existing against the current model regulations, it is the view of the Clerk that the matters mentioned are not relevant to the Council and therefore, no further action is required.

- 9.1.4. **9. Asset control** - The recommendation is "whilst there have been no acquisitions or disposals during 2015/16 and 2016/17 Council should ensure that the Asset Register is not out of date as the risk of financial loss can be greatly reduced by setting up an asset register which holds current information"

The Asset Register was not out of date when presented and the auditor acknowledged there had been no acquisitions or disposals. However, the date on the register was the date when printed. This has been corrected. No further action is required.

- 9.1.5. **10. Bank reconciliation** - The recommendation is "good practice as stated in the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - A Practitioner's Guide - March 2014 - identifies the bank reconciliation as being the most notable procedure to ensure that accounting systems are being observed. The reporting of the latest bank reconciliation at each council meeting is considered to be good practice and would show robust monitoring procedures are in place and would help members of the council to understand fully patterns of income flows during the year and inform their decision-making process"

Although the financial affairs of Lackford Parish Council are minuscule, the Clerk does, within Sage, prepare monthly accounts and produce a Budget Report and Balance Sheet and this includes a full bank reconciliation, done within Sage. However, the monthly accounts are not issued to Councillors and although they could very easily be issued, the Clerk does not believe that Councillors would wish to receive them. A budget reconciliation is prepared for the December and March meetings and a full Financial Statement that shows Income and Expenditure and a Balance Sheet is produced annually and is normally signed off during the Annual Parish Meeting. This currently leaves the October meeting without any budgetary reconciliation.

Sage can produce a bank reconciliation report, but the Clerk is not convinced that this would be helpful, needed or used by Parish Councillors, as generally all it would show would be the current balances. We could of course simply report the current balances, but the balances as figures mean nothing because they do not take into account ongoing expenditure in future periods, or specific reserves. Consequently, a false picture could be given. Hence, the Clerk would not be comfortable with this. This Council, in normal years, only has one receipt, and this is the Precept that is received at the end of April.

To satisfy the auditor a budget reconciliation, as included with the December and March agenda, could be included at the October meeting if required by Council, and as included in this agenda.

- 9.1.6. **15. Additional comments** - The recommendation is "that as a Data Handler, Council should ensure that it reviews the requirements for registration"

The Council considered the matter very carefully when raised in 2015 and discussed the matter with the ICO. The view of the council was that registration was not necessary, as the Council do not handle "Data". Further and thorough checking on the ICO website in July 2017 using the "Registration self-assessment" procedure states, "You are under no requirement to register". Therefore, no further action is required.

- ❖ **Council should review and consider the auditor's recommendations and the interpretation of the matters by the Clerk, and the action as proposed. An appropriate proposal should then be made.**

The proposal could read, "Council acknowledge the recommendations of the auditor but accept the review by the clerk and action as proposed."

- 9.2. **External audit - For year ending 31 March 2017** - No matters came to the attention of the external auditor that would give them cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

- 9.2.1. **Other matters not affecting their opinion** - These have been drawn to the attention of the Council, in the form of an "Issues Arising Report" that must be presented to a full meeting of the smaller authority for review.

This report it is the same as the report received last year. At the Council meeting of 10 October 2016, Councillors reviewed the matters and were satisfied that they were complying with the regulations and that no further action need be taken. A proposal to that effect was approved by Council. (Refer to minute 8.2 of minutes dated 10 October 2016.)

- 9.3. **The Annual Return** - a minute is required to note that the Annual Return has been approved by the external auditor.

10. Questions from members and registered electors of the Parish attending the meeting on: Matters of concern, for report or for information only, by permission of the Chairman. *(Note: the Parish Council cannot make decisions on any matter not on the agenda)*

11. To confirm the date and time of the next and future meetings

The next Parish Council Meeting (Meeting No 3) was previously proposed as:

Monday 11 December 2017 at 7:30pm in Lackford Church.

Proposed dates for future meetings:

Monday 12 March 2018 (Meeting No 4) - 2nd Monday in March
Monday 14 May 2018 (APM & AGM) - 2nd Monday in May
Monday 08 October 2018 (Meeting No 2) - 2nd Monday in October
Monday 10 December 2018 (Meeting No 3) - 2nd Monday in December