

LEA & COTTAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S CHURCH HALL, BLACKPOOL ROAD, LEA, PRESTON AT 7.30 PM on MONDAY 18TH FEBRUARY 2008

PRESENT: Cllrs A Butler (Chairman) P Oliver, P Helvin, V Clarke, J Coward, A Dickinson, M Clegg, N Ward, L Talbot and D Lambert.

1 member of the public was present.

17/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Edwards and Jones

18/08 NOTIFICATION OF INTERESTS

None

19/08 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was resolved that the minutes of meeting held on the 7th January 2008 (previously circulated) be approved and signed by the Chairman.

20/08 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The meeting was adjourned to listen to representations from the public.

A representative of the Preston HIV Support Team gave a short presentation regarding the activities of the group which is a registered charity in support of their recent application for a general donation. It was explained that the Council's policy with regard to donations was anticipated to be resolved later in the evening under a specific agenda item and that contact with the group would be made once this policy had been established.

The minutes of the last PACT meeting were handed out to members and brief additional detail was provided by one of the Council's PACT representatives.

A general invitation to all members to visit the 'Citizen Zone' vehicle was handed out.

It was mentioned that an invitation had been received for up to 6 members to attend the Green Partnership Awards Ceremony in May 2008. The Chairman is to attend as the official Council representative and members should contact him if they also wish to go along.

A copy of a letter received by a local resident in response to issues raised at a recent public meeting was read out:

Issues with regard to refuse collection and container lids blowing away have been raised with Preston CC who have acknowledged ongoing problems and are looking at piloting alternative measures in part of the City. In the mean time issues may be reported direct to PCC on 01772 906905.

The contact with regard to the proposed multi use games area in Lea is the Parish Council

Issues with PNE training ground are hopefully to be discussed at a future meeting between the police, Preston CC and PNE themselves.

The meeting was reconvened.

21/08 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) It was resolved that the following payments should be approved

500435	SLCC	Clerk's Subscription	161.00
500436	Destroyed	N/A	N/A
500437	SLCC Conference	Clerk's Attendance	223.25
500438	Greenwood Gardening Services	Lengthsman	374.00
500439	Preston CC	Bulbs – Western Approach	426.41
500440	St Christopher's Church	Room Hire	25.00
500441	Preston City Council	Christmas Tree	925.90
500442	Greenwood Gardening Services	Lengthsman	379.99

b) It was resolved that the Statement of Accounts to 31st December 2007 (previously circulated) should be approved.

22/08 DONATIONS

It was resolved that the following policy should be adopted in respect of any future donation request:

That any donation should be to a parish based or non parish based non profit making organisation or group who can clearly evidence 'specific' benefit (excludes general donations) to the parish area or some of its residents and who can evidence such expenditure if required and generally do not have sufficient other resources to deliver the specific benefit for which the funds are to be used or would likely not deliver the benefit outlined without additional financial support.

23/08 CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS

It was resolved that an additional set of 'festoons' and necessary transformer should be purchased at a cost of approx £400

24/08 SURGERIES

It was resolved that in the light of the poor level of attendance at past surgeries no further surgeries should be arranged for the time being.

25/08 SKIPTON EAST LANCASHIRE RAIL ACTION PARTNERSHIP (SELRAP)

It was resolved that in response to a request from the above group that this Council join 11 Town, 9 Borough and 42 Parish Councils in supporting the SELRAP campaign to re-open the Colne to Skipton railway

26/08 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

It was resolved that this Council should be involved on the same basis as last year in the 2008 wreath laying ceremony at the flag market which involves the purchase of a wreath at £50.00 (by way of donation) under S137 LGA 1972.

27/08 PRECEPTS AND PROJECTS

Members noted that the contribution from Preston City Council to the amount directly claimed from the residents of the parish by way of Precept has this year been 'capped' at a figure of £7.50 per band 'D' property or 50% of the Precept whichever is the lower. In the past the amount was simply 50% of the Precept. This does not affect the amount received by the Parish Council since the Precept is levied against the residents of the Parish however it may result in a different figure being shown on the Council Tax bills since the contribution from PCC may be reduced resulting in residents seeing what is ostensibly a higher increase in their contribution. In the case of Lea and Cottam PC the PCC contribution will be capped as above at what will be a figure of 49% of the total Precept. The only change this will create is in the way the Council Tax bills will appear in that the % increase for the Parish element will appear at slightly over 5% whereas in reality we have only increased our Precept by 3%. This system may see a gradual switch of funding whereby PCC contributions may reduce over time relative to the amount raised by the Parish Council. In many ways this is a fairer system since it will provide a PCC contribution based on the electorate numbers rather than the spend of the Council itself. Residents in small parishes with large spends may see a significant reduction in the PCC contribution and thus a higher direct resident contribution than previously.

The Precept for 2008/9 was recently set at a figure of £31800.00 based on a budget forecast produced by the Clerk which incorporated certain project expenditure.

Members were asked to formally approve the projects listed below so that appropriate actions could be taken by the Clerk within the agreed budgets.

- Lengthsman Contract Renewal on the basis of 11 hours per week average (52 weeks) at a rate of £11.50 per hour with Peter Greenwood to include Dodney Drive grass cutting as previously agreed. This will utilise £6578.00 of budget leaving £214.00 in reserve in case of need.
- Renewal of the Newsletter printing arrangements with our existing supplier to include 4 quarterly issues and the production of an Annual Report total budget £1400.00
- 2008 Christmas Tree budget £1000.00
- Lea Town Hanging Baskets budget £500.00

Members were further asked to authorise that the Clerk and Chairman sign the Lengthsman contract and Miller Green Grass cutting contract for 2008 subject to changes in the case of the latter in respect of the number of grass cuts to Miller Green being amended to 15 per year and the contract price being amended to £1950 as previously approved.

It was resolved that the projects detailed above should be formally approved and that the Clerk should take appropriate actions to implement them within the agreed budgets.

It was further resolved that the Clerk and Chairman sign the Lengthsman contract and Miller Green Grass cutting contract for 2008 subject to changes in the case of the latter in respect of the number of grass cuts to Miller Green being amended to 15 per year and the contract price being amended to £1950 as previously approved.

28/08 WESTERN APPROACH BULB PLANTING

Last year a further 10000 bulbs were planted on the verges by the Western Approach to the Parish as part of a project considered 2 years ago to enhance the appearance of this area. The costs involved were lengthsman time taken from within the existing contract and the purchase of the bulbs at approx £400.00 both costs being partially offset by a grant of £500 from the Green Partnership Awards Scheme. Consideration needs to be given to extending further the planting arrangements although it may not be possible to obtain a further grant for what is an extension of the same scheme.

It was resolved that further planting along the verges should be undertaken by the purchase of a further 10000 bulbs to be planted in November 2008 at a cost of say £450.00 (labour costs to be absorbed into the lengthsman contract)

29/08 LANCASHIRE LOCALS CLIMATE CHANGE FUND

It was resolved that this Council note the availability of funding for climate change projects through Lancashire Locals, that they seek to identify projects for the benefit of the parish in which they may become involved either solely or in partnership with other community groups and apply to access these funds whenever appropriate

30/08 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday 31st March 2008