

# **Minutes of The Annual Meeting of Loddon Parish held on Wednesday 12 April 2023 at 7.00pm in the Hollies Rear Hall**

**Present:** Chairman of Loddon Parish Council: Kay Mason Billig

**Loddon Parish Council (LPC):** Cllr June Strickland (JS), Cllr Liz Marsham (LM), Julie Appleby (JA), Colin Binfield (CB), Arthur Morris (AM), Jane Hale (JH) and Alan Wildman (AW)

**Loddon Town Estate Charity:** Ann Lumley

**Holy Trinity Church:** David Owen (Rector)

**In Attendance:** Emily Curtis (Parish Clerk), Georgina Hirst, (Responsible Finance Officer, RFO), Jo Leonard (Administration and Allotment Officer, AAO) and seven members of the public.

**1: Apologies:** None.

**2: Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 April 2022:** Approved as a correct record.

## **3: LPC's Annual Report:**

LPC's Chairman, Kay Mason Billig gave a verbal report and mentioned the Council's various projects:

- the renovation of the Kitten's Lane Play Area
- the success of the Community Larder and Christmas bag event, the new ramp to the war memorial in time for remembrance Sunday
- Staithe toilets refurbishment, reduced vandalism and payments to assist with the cost of running the facility
- Church Plain car park refurbishment

The Council recently held a public planning meeting to ensure that residents had an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed housing development.

The Council has well trained staff, and in recent months, the whole Council has undertaken training.

## **4. Annual Reports:**

### **a) County Cllr Annual Report (Norfolk County Council):**

In addition to the written report, the County Cllr Kay Mason Billig gave an update on the reinstatement of the Wherryman's Way.

### **b) District Cllr Annual Report (South Norfolk Council)**

District Cllr Kay Mason Billig gave a verbal report on the recent work that she has been involved with on behalf of the local parishes:

- Staithe Footbridge
- new mobile phone mask at Chedgrave

### **c) Loddon Town Estate Charity Annual Report**

This year saw new challenges faced by many as the cost-of-living crisis affected homes. Through an advertising push, the charity was able to help a number of families, from food to furniture and even medical expenses. I hope that the higher profile of the charity within the community will encourage more to come forward if they need assistance in any way. Even if the charity is unable to help financially, it can often direct those in need to organisations that could assist them.

From an income perspective, the charity received a number of generous donations from members of the community while the investments continued to earn good dividends. In addition, a gift aid claim added to the total income for the year.

As we head into what could be yet another difficult year for many, but for different reasons, I hope the charity can reach those in the community in need of support and can continue the wonderful work it has done for many years now.

Finally, our secretary, Mrs Ann Lumley, decided to retire on 31 December after 19 years' service. The Trustees and I thank her for all her hard work and support over the past 2 decades and wish her a very happy retirement. Taking over the role of Secretary is Julie Ponsford and I would like to thank her for agreeing to take on the role and welcome her to the team.

### **d) Loddon & Chedgrave Playing Field Committee (L & C PFC)**

The L & C PFC have met on 4 occasions over the past year. The installation of the CCTV has proved a success with the incidents of dog fouling decreasing. The revised Terms of Reference have finally been agreed by both Councils. There was a large amount of storm damage to the trees on the field perimeter which was costly to rectify. The Tennis Club was formed in June 2022 and has now 110 members. It is affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association and was awarded Tennis Club of the year 2023/24, a huge achievement. The PFC has agreed to replace the playing surface of the Courts and to replace the court lighting with LED lights. With contributions from members a club house and a "hitting wall" are to be installed.

The storage containers adjacent to the courts are to be refurbished due to their dilapidated state.

A meeting was held with the Loddon United Football Club (LUFC) over the terms of the Pitch hire agreement, and the fee for the use of the pitches was set at £800 for the 2023-2024 season to be ratified by LUFC/L & C PFC. A "sinking fund" was also suggested for the renovation of the pitches and field, something which had not been previously factored into the precept.

Colin Gould - L & C PFC Chairman

### **e) Jubilee Hall Management Committee (JHMC)**

In lieu of a written report from the JHMC, LTC representatives gave a verbal report.

The JubHub has replaced the Taproom.

The main hall has new lighting and there are more badminton bookings as a result.

The hall is also now used by tennis clubs and there are more parties and bookings.

The car parking is major issue for the hall users and the football club.

### **f) Holy Trinity Church**

Throughout the year the church has played its customary role of being a beacon of faith for the community. This includes our regular and occasional services, as well as providing opportunities for people to take 'time out' from their busy lives. The church is open every day, and while we occasionally suffer silliness as a result of youngsters being at a loose end, we also welcome a lot of visitors as well as local people. Of course, we also take part in national events as appropriate – in particular we held the local Book of Condolence following the death of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

It is not widely known that the Church in Loddon is required to pay in the region of £26,000 a year into the Anglican central pot plus £10,000 to the Methodist Church. This is in addition to building maintenance and day-to-day running costs. We are therefore always grateful to the Parish Council for its payment towards churchyard maintenance. Without this support it is unlikely that the job would be done, which would certainly be unpopular. On this subject I occasionally receive grumbles that mowers or strimmers have been careless and damaged vases or stones in the churchyard. In the case of legally permissible items, I do support those making complaints. If items are not among those permitted, that is a different matter.

On a community front, we have taken part in events such as the Platinum Jubilee fete and the regular Victorian Evening. We offer a distribution outlet for Norwich Foodbank and together with All Saints Chedgrave we are involved with the Chet Valley Food Larder. Community well-being is important to us. But underlying all we do is the Christian faith – the good news of Jesus's life, death and resurrection which we have celebrated at Easter and continue to celebrate every week of the year.

Rvd David Owen - Rector, Chet Valley

### **g) Loddon Building Preservation Trust**

Annual report from the Loddon Buildings' Preservation Trust (LBPT) – 2022-2023

The LBPT is incorporated charity governed by a charitable deed. The aim of the trust is to maintain the Hollies and keep them open for the use of community clubs and activities.

The trustees are responsible for the running and the maintenance of the facilities. The trustees meet monthly. There are currently five trustees. More trustees are required to manage the building and to take on the renovation that the building requires.

Throughout the year, work continued to develop the contract with the Nursery, a building behind the Hollies which is also owned by the LBPT, for a long lease. This is expected to be signed in the next month.

Rental and development activities were limited by the Covid 19 pandemic. Financially, Covid relief grants made up for the loss of rent. Since the Annexe was taken full time by the Community Gym, bookings at the Hollies have increased significantly.

Larry Dainty spends about six hours a month taking bookings, showing new users around and generally caretaking both the Hollies and Nursery buildings.

Despite constant efforts, little progress has been made to build a team to renovate the Hollies building. In the absence of any volunteers coming forward to help, the trustees are expecting to use a consultant to develop the strategy for the building and, based upon this, put together a bid for grant funding. The work on the strategy is expected to commence during 2023.

Nonetheless, the trustees urgently need to find people to help either as trustees or specifically to join a subgroup to manage the renovation. The Hollies could be an excellent community hall, right at the heart of the village: but without additional volunteers, it may sadly never achieve this.

## **h) Loddon Community Gym**

The Gym is a not-for-profit business / community resource set up nine years ago in the Jubilee Hall with a management committee, constitution and much enthusiasm. For a few years previously South Norfolk District Council had operated an itinerant gym from the back of a lorry that travelled, on different days, to villages in the area. Loddon was the only venue that flourished and SNC handed it over in April 2014 to be run locally. The Gym fills an acknowledged gap in provision in this part of South Norfolk and in addition to its own fundraising has been supported by grants from SNC each year so far.

Following the Covid Pandemic several former members were unable, for various reasons, to return and we were failing to attract new members. I took over as chair of the management committee in January last year and could see that our financial viability was in jeopardy. We did not want to see the Gym die a slow painful death for lack of the courage to embrace a new venture. If we were to go down, we would go down fighting. Our great good fortune was discovering that the Library Annexe might be available and with the support of our local councillors, Loddon PC agreed to rent us the Annexe. We moved in at the beginning of August. Our members are delighted with the move and, because our instructor does not now have to move the equipment in and out of storage every session, using her same hours we are now open some part of each day Monday to Friday. Another bonus of moving into the library annexe is that we can easily increase our opening hours if there is demand at little extra cost.

We are proud of the Gym and the service we provide in this community. Every member has a medical check and a programme tailored to suit their fitness level and what they want to achieve. We keep our charges as reasonable as we can (£20 annual membership plus £5 per session or £30 per month for unlimited use). We are still strapped for cash and still rely on grants but our aim is to spread the word about how well equipped and accessible the Gym is and hopefully attract more members in the coming months.

Angela Capper (Hon. Chair)

## **i) Norfolk Police**

Year to date, 82 crimes recorded, this is down from 99 the previous year. ASB is down on last year to date, 9 to 3, of course we have the summer to contend with as yet. Burglary is down from 7 to 5 at present. Criminal damage down from 17 to 19, I am not aware of any most recent repeated issues since the public toilet problems) Drug possession is down from 2 to 1. Public order related offences are down from 25 to 18.

We have recently arrested and interviewed the homeless male posted on Facebook burning items on private land and he is on Bail pending more enquiries.

As ever my advice going forward is to ensure property is secured, not on display and doors, windows and garages closed/locked securely, to report any suspicious activity to me or 999 if appropriate, such as a crime in progress, if anyone wishes to discuss more security advice in more detail they can get in touch with me of course.

Please encourage the public to report anything to me so I can check it out, if they are not sure I can always check myself.

I have been carrying out speed enforcement as and when I can in the area and will continue to do so, I stay in touch with our safety camera partnership on this also so if there are any areas that need attention that I do not know about (not the 20mph!) please let me know.

The latest set of Priorities for the area for 1st April – 30th June are; 1. Speeding 2. Burglary/Theft 3. Drug possession/dealing.

**Local Police Beat Officer - PC James King**

## **j) Neighbourhood Plan Update**

The draft plan has been submitted to both South Norfolk District Council and the Broads Authority for environmental screening and we have already received some constructive feedback from the Broads Authority. All relevant documentation is on our website [www.chetnp.info](http://www.chetnp.info)

Consultation days are being organised in both Loddon and Chedgrave and these will be 2-4pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> June and 10-12am on the 17<sup>th</sup> June. These days will consist of a presentation followed by a 'Question & Answer' session. It is anticipated that there will be two presentations during each of the two hour sessions to allow anyone who wishes the opportunity to attend – please look out for further information and timings in next month's Chet Contact and posters around the two villages.

The formal consultation is expected to run from around the 22<sup>nd</sup> May until mid-July to enable residents from the Chet Neighbourhood Plan area to comment.

We are currently working on an 'Executive Summary'. This will summarise the main points of the plan and highlight local issues raised. This will be published on our website as soon as it is completed and will also form part of The Plan.

We hope that you take the time to have a look at this and use the link provided [Chet Neighbourhood Plan | Contact \(chetnp.info\)](http://Chet Neighbourhood Plan | Contact (chetnp.info)) to provide us with your comments or by sending an email to [neighbourhoodplan@loddonpc.org.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodplan@loddonpc.org.uk)

Chet Neighbourhood Plan Team  
[www.chetnp.info](http://www.chetnp.info)

## **5. Public Forum**

A MOP mentioned their concerns regarding the parking on George Lane outside the takeaways.

A MOP mentioned that the Staithe footbridge is the first thing tourists see when they approach Loddon. District Cllr KB replied that South Norfolk Council have accepted responsibility for the footbridge and have reserved £150,000 toward the refurbishment of the bridge and access into the river for small boats and kayaks.

## **6. Date of next meeting: 27 March 2024 at 7.00pm**

**The meeting ended at 7.30pm.**