

MARTIN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 14 May 2007, in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr MJ Stephens MBE, Cllr B Downing, Cllr F Phillip, Cllr S Phillip and Mrs K Stephens Parish Clerk. Also in attendance was District Cllr F Ambridge.

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr J Evans, Cllr Vickers and Cllr W Busby; County Cllr P Bradwell was also unable to attend.

It was confirmed that the result of the recent election process was to confirm in office all existing Parish Councillors and that all required documentation had been completed.

1. Election of Chair. In the absence of new nomination, it was resolved that as he indicated his willingness, Cllr MJ Stephens MBE should continue as Chair.
2. Vacancies. The Chair advised that following on from the elections, there are still vacancies on the Council that may be filled by co-option. However, there are no candidates and the Chair requested that suitable persons be identified and action initiated to recruit them to the Council.
3. Election of Vice-Chair. In the absence of new nomination, it was resolved that as he indicated his willingness, Cllr C Vickers should continue as Vice-Chair.
4. To Appoint Officers to External Bodies. It was confirmed that the Council has no requirement to appoint to External Bodies.
5. To Appoint Members to Sub-Committees. It was resolved that Cllr B Downing should be appointed to the Playing Field Committee and that he should undertake the duties of Chair.
6. To Consider and Confirm Payment of Annual Subscriptions. It was resolved that the following annual subscriptions should be paid at their due date:
 - Insurance
 - Drainage Rates
 - Audit Fees
 - Clerks & Council Direct
 - LALC Update
 - LALC Annual Training Scheme
 - LALC Annual Subscription
7. To Inspect Deeds/Trust Implements. As none are held in the custody of the Parish Clerk, this was not possible. The Clerk was directed to contact the Council's legal advisors in order to determine what documents might be held and to obtain them for inspection at a future meeting.
8. To Inspect, Confirm/Amend Orders and Regulations:
 - Standing Orders – these have been rewritten/amended in the light of changes in legislation, circulated in advance of the meeting and were endorsed by the Council.
 - Rules and Regulations for the Burial Ground – since these had not previously existed, a suitable document had been drawn up based upon a similar document from another local Parish Council, custom and practice and advice from LALC. In addition the level of charges to be raised had been adjusted to reflect local conditions and inflation. This document having been circulated in advance of the meeting was accepted and endorsed by the Council.
 - Modern Farm Allotment Agreements - recent changes in legislation have brought about new agreements. A specimen agreement was circulated prior to the meeting. The council resolved to adopt this procedure with immediate effect for changes to tenancies. It was noted that existing tenants shall continue under their current agreements.

9. Minutes of Previous Meeting. The minutes of the meeting of 26 March 2007 were accepted as being correct, proposed by Cllr F Phillip and seconded by Cllr B Downing with all in favour. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.
10. Clerk's Report on Matters Outstanding.
- Martin Playing Field – the response to NKDC has been sent.
 - Dog Fouling North Moor Lane – Mrs Forman is happy to accept a dog fouling sign by her property, providing she is contacted prior to erection. NKDC have agreed to provide a further stock of signs.
 - Bus Stops – the Council's comments have been passed to the County Council who have acknowledged and are progressing their installation.
 - Stepping Stones Encroachment - NKDC have advised that this will be removed by the end of June.
11. Reports from Outside Bodies District Cllr F Ambridge gave a brief overview of the District Council Annual Report. Particular points were:
- NKDC have been the first Council in the East Midlands to be awarded a Charter for member training and development.
 - The Council has joined with the County Council and seven other District Authorities to explore how shared services in local government can be successfully developed.
 - The Council has further improved access to their services with the opening of a new customer service centre – this is able to deal with all matters.
 - Council Tax – a collection rate of 99.4% has been achieved, a rate beaten by only one other council in the country. The Council are working to encourage more and more older people to claim rebates to which they are entitled.
 - The Anti Benefit Fraud Campaign resulted in 17 prosecutions.
 - Recycling – the Council is top of the national league table for recycling and is the only area in the country to recycle over 50% of its waste.
 - Planning – new facility available on web site and achieves the rate of 400 enquiries per quarter.
 - Lincolnshire Youth Games – Sports Outreach NK, 130 young persons successfully competed at the Lincolnshire Youth Games
 - Affordable housing – 152 new affordable homes are to be built across the District including some in the Parish behind Pound Road.
 - New car park in Sleaford has just opened with 137 spaces.
12. Correspondence:
- Election of councillors – confirmation of election results.
 - Standard Boards Code of Conduct – copy distributed to all Councillors.
 - Notice of Audit – noted and process has been initiated in order to meet deadlines. Summary of financial account for the year ending 31 March 2007 was reviewed and accepted subject to audit (copy attached).
 - EMDA News Letter – noted.
 - Parish Partnership Initiative – discussed, it was resolved that at this time the Council does not wish to join in this activity.
 - Royal Mail Charges – the Council is invited to support a campaign to persuade the Government to re-introduce concessionary postal charges for service personnel overseas. This was unanimously agreed and the Clerk asked to send an appropriate letter.
 - LCC Statement of Community Involvement – noted
 - Local Councils' Update – reviewed nothing of significance at this time.
 - Visit of Mobile Police Station – notice displayed on notice board.
 - Temporary Road Closure – detail of closure of Kirkstead Bridge for resurfacing. Copies have already been displayed around Martin Dales and content advised to Woodhall Surgery.
 - Planning Training – no Councillors available to attend this session.

13. Councillors' Questions

Cllr F Phillip asked if the heavily overgrown area of the Sports Field adjacent to the footpath could be cleared as it poses a threat to the community as it provides a possible place of concealment. After a short discussion it was agreed that the Clerk is to write to the school trustees as the owners of this land, to seek their assistance

14. Sub-Committee Reports:

Report to Council from the Playing Field Committee

The year has seen limited progress in restoring the playing field to use. North Kesteven District Council has confirmed responsibility for restitution costs and has proposed three options as to possible ways ahead. These options are being further explored and in particular how the costs set out have been achieved.

Despite the problems, efforts were undertaken to achieve partial restoration of the amenity by way of setting up a discrete small children's play area. A costing exercise was undertaken and a bid prepared for submission to Lincolnshire County Council, unfortunately this could not be progressed due to concerns that by doing so this could compromise the NKDC activities.

Nonetheless, part of the area has remained in use by the Cricket Club under the School Trustees and from time to time has provided space for young people to undertake some limited pastimes. Grateful appreciation for their tolerance and forbearance is accordingly recorded.

It is hoped that rekindled interest of late in the village will prompt urgent action by the District Council and that, the forthcoming Public Meeting will achieve this.

15. Planning

- Refusal of Garage at 1 Church Road Martin Dales – this was noted and the reasons endorsed.
- Approval of extensions to the Nursing Home.
- Approval of change of use 27 High Street, Martin.
- Notice of erection of four dwellings at Mill Lane – discussed and no comments made.
- Hay Store at Tipplers' Rest Martin Moor - discussed and although it was felt that this application did not accord with the original building consents, the justification is appropriate and the Council would not oppose this application.

16. Financial Report from Clerk

	£
Bank Reconciliation Balance brought forward	7458.38
Receipts	2931.00
Total	10389.38
Minus receipt for £55.00 not yet on statement	55.00
Total income	£10334.38
No payments	
Cumulative Funds	
Reserve a/c	6884.68
Current a/c	3449.70
Total	£10334.38

To be paid

Mrs K Stephens's reimbursement for payments made to:

SLCC Membership	£72.00	
SLCC CiLCA Management	£70.00	£ 142.00
LALC Training – CiLCA		£ 110.00
Authorised 26 Mar 07		

Proposed by Cllr F Phillip seconded by Cllr B Downing with all in favour, that the following payments be made:

Mr G Smith Grass Cutting 12 Mar 07/04 Apr 07	£40.00.	
	12 Apr 07/27 Apr 07	£40.00
Shaw & Sons - Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial		£62.75

17. Public Questions – None were received.
18. Next meeting – this is to be in the village hall at 19.30 on Tuesday 29 May 2007 and that will be the Annual Public Meeting. The next routine Council Meeting will be held in the village hall on Monday 30 July 2007