

**Minutes of the Lacey Parish Council Meeting held at the Stanford Centre,
Cooper Lane Lacey on Tuesday 17th December 2013 at 7.30 p.m.**

**11020 Present: Chairman – Councillor D. Marshall.
Councillors: Mrs. S. Turner. Mrs. H. Barnett. Mrs. B. Metcalf.
M. Greenbeck.**

Also Present: Debbie Weatherill – Clerk.

**11021 Apologies: Councillors: Mrs. R. James. K. Brockelsby. P. Schofield.
Mrs. C. Grimely. Mrs. C. Mumby.**

Councillor Marshall informed those present that Councillor Mumby would not be attending meetings until April 2014 due to personal circumstances – the Clerk was requested to check with ERNLLCA in respect of planning meetings being included in the six consecutive meetings clause of the Local Government Act 1972.

11022 Declarations of Interest & Dispensation Requests

None received.

The Clerk reported that she had received no planning applications for discussion at this meeting.

There were no members of the Public present and therefore no Public Forum.

The Chairman then requested that the meeting be moved along to the Budget/Precept part of the agenda.

11023 Budget for the Financial Year 2014/2015

The Clerk had previously circulated a suggested budget for the financial year to 31st March 2015 and stated that she had not just added a percentage amount to all the figures but considered each item prior to making a suggested increase which was for consideration of the Council the amounts not being set in stone.

Councillor Greenbeck suggested spending some of the money in reserves on items listed in the Lacey Directory – on something visible.

All Councillors present were of the opinion that they did not want to see the precept increased at all, and that they did not want to reduce it either. The Clerk stated that if the Parish Council did not increase the precept then they may have to use money from reserves.

It was noted that the renewal of the Cemetery Fence adjacent to Victoria Park had been done free by NELC – the Parish Council having thought originally that they may have to spend money on this.

Councillor Marshall also stated that he had saved the Parish Council money by having had a firewall cut at the rear of the houses on Butt Lane which backed onto the Nature Area and this would have cost over a thousand pounds, but was also done free of charge. So it was noted that the Parish Council had not had this expenditure as originally thought.

Councillor Greenbeck suggested spending money on new signs for the entrances to the village and Councillor Marshall stated that the Parish Council had to look at being responsible and not waste money.

Councillor Marshall also stated that there might be future expenditure on the Butt Lane field, and that NELC may not continue cutting the grass verges in the village so the Parish Council may have to maintain these too.

Talk then turned to the possibility of purchasing a larger mower and where such a mower might then be stored; no budget figure having been agreed on this since it was not yet known if the Parish Council would have maintenance costs thrust on them by NELC in respect of grass verges etc.

The Chairman then went through each item of the budget which was discussed with those present.

Admin costs were considered and it was suggested that emailed allotment invoices might be sent out to those allotment tenants who paid quarterly to save on paper and postage. The Clerk stated she would send out a form for completion by all tenants to try and achieve this saving with the annual invoices sent in April.

Concerns were expressed regarding the budgeted amount for the church clock and the Clerk informed those present that she had suggested the amount in the budget to cover servicing and some maintenance costs. It was agreed however that should the public clock require major repairs then these would have to be paid for out of reserves.

Churchyard costs were difficult to predict since this year's budget had already nearly been spent due to the problems with the leaning wall – the Clerk suggested taking the noticeboard budget figure of £1,500.00 and moving it to this year's churchyard figure to cover further expenses on the Churchyard up to the new financial year; since it was unlikely that the Parish Council would have a new noticeboard by the end of this financial year.

It was agreed to leave the budget for the Churchyard in 2014/15 at the figure of £3,000.00 as suggested by the Clerk since again the Parish Council did not know what the costs of repairing the wall and dealing with the trees in the Churchyard might cost them. Quotations for work on the inspection trench not yet having been received.

After further discussions, it was proposed by Councillor Turner and seconded by Councillor Greenbeck that the budget should be accepted for the financial year 2014/2015.

11024 Precept for the year 2014/2015

It was unanimously resolved to put forward a precept of £32,000.00 to include the NELC grant again for the financial year 2014/2015 subject to any guidelines laid down by Central Government. This figure was to be put forward for ratification at the January meeting; and it was noted that by that time the Government should have issued their guidelines on Parish Precepts for the next financial year.

Councillor Greenbeck stated that it was good management that a 0% increase was to be put forward for the next financial year.

The Clerk was requested to include ratification of the Precept for 2014/2015 on the Agenda for the January meeting.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 8.35 p.m..

SIGNED..... 7th January 2013

Chairman