



Parish Office, Sports Pavilion, Hundred Acre Way, Red Lodge, Suffolk, IP28 8FQ  
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## **Minutes of the Red Lodge Annual Parish Meeting**

This is an informal meeting for all local government electors registered in the parish.

**Date:** Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Time:** 19:00

**Venue:** Remote Zoom Meeting

**Present:** Cllr. Leslie Smith (Chairman)  
Cllr. Richard Saul (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr. Susan Houlder  
Cllr. Vanessa Kovacevic  
Cllr. Jemma Sheedy

**In Attendance:** Clerk/RFO  
D.Cllr. Dawn Dicker  
Members of the public: 4

**Notes:** The following documents will be appended to the signed minutes:-

- Agenda for APM 04.05.21

	Item	Action
1.	<b>Chairperson's welcome</b>	
2.	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  Cllr. Bloomfield and D.Cllr. Bradshaw <b>Noted</b>	
3.	<b>Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council</b>  <b>3.1</b> The Chairman provided a summary report covering the past two years. Following elections in May 2019 7 new councillors were appointed. The parish office was found to be run efficiently and the grounds team required some assistance to operate with greater efficiency. A Pavilion Supervisor was appointed in 2019 followed by an assistant in 2020. Working closely with the 2 new employees led to a notable improvement in the standards of the parish. The Ford tipper truck previously purchased for £15000 was not used and therefore was sold at a small loss. The sports pitches are now following a renovation program which has resulted in major improvements of the pitch surface. The installation of a bore hole with 2 distribution points to each pitch, this allows a pitch to be watered in a day or two.  The playgrounds are continued to be monitored and maintained. The wet pour surfaces in Heatherset play area and the pavilion play area will be repaired at a cost of over £10000. The grass surface at Lavender Close play area has been replaced with a wet pour surface. Although it has been a difficult year for events, the following events were held: 2x quiz evenings; a murder mystery; a children's Christmas party and a Christmas event for dogs. A tree planting scheme in Red Lodge will be financed by a charity. It is anticipated that the sports pitches will be fenced off to allow dog walkers to walk their dogs in the perimeters of the pitches only. On easing of the lockdown Covid-19 restrictions, the public will be invited to comment on plans to extend the sports pavilion. The Chairman thanked everyone. <b>Noted</b>	
4.	<b>Reports from County and District Councillors</b>  <b>4.1</b> Due to purdah D.Cllr. Dicker was observing the meeting only. <b>Noted</b>	
5.	<b>Reports from Mildenhall Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team</b>  <b>5.1</b> There were no reports from the police. <b>Noted</b>	
6.	<b>Reports from Groups attending the meeting</b>	

<p><b>6.1 Red Lodge Scouts</b></p>	<p>1st Red Lodge Scout Group continues to thrive. The 14 months of Covid restrictions have been challenging. Although we were not allowed to meet face to face, we continued weekly programmes on Zoom. The leaders had to adapt quickly and learn new skills. Parents too stepped up and became the “leader” at home helping their Beaver, Cub or Scout to keep engaged in scouting activities and achieve many badge awards. We have also run several “camps at home” where the young people either put up a tent in their garden and camped, or those who didn’t have access to a tent, made a den in their house to sleep in. We circulated activities to do during the day including backwoods cooking on fires, going for a hike, learning some basic pioneering skills as well as craft and science activities. We came together on Zoom and Facebook Live for campfire sessions.</p> <p>In this way, we have kept most of our young membership.</p> <p>We have just begun to meet face to face again, although in small groups and only outdoors at the moment. Hopefully we will be able to all meet again in the Millennium Centre soon.</p> <p>Only being able to meet outdoors has presented the problem of where to meet, where we can do activities in a safe environment. We are using the pavilion field and also the heath but these are public spaces and we are limited in the activities we can do. Scouts are able to use an area of Upton Farm land where we site our container. Mr Upton is very supportive and has given his permission. The other problem is not having access to toilets so we are having to limit the length of time we meet. This has highlighted a real need for the scout group to have an area of land which we can make secure and use for our outdoor activities and also site our storage container. We are aware we will need to move the container soon as the building development moves closer and the area it is on is part of the development.</p> <p>Is this project something the Parish Council can help with?</p> <p>We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated leaders who readily give their time not only on a weekly basis but at some weekend too and I thank them all for everything they do. However it is only a small team and recruiting more adults is always an ongoing concern. In recent weeks I have endeavoured to address this by using social media material developed by the Scout Association and posting these at regular intervals on the two village community Facebook groups. This has resulted in 3 people coming forward and volunteering. It’s still early days, but hopefully they will all decide to stay and become regular helpers. The more adults involved, the easier it is to share the load of planning and delivering activities.</p> <p>Over the past 12 months or more we have not been able to do any of our usual fundraising events and we have also reduced the amount payable by parents for termly subscriptions to help out families especially those who were financially affected by Covid. Consequently, we have been using our financial reserves to pay for group expenses such as insurance etc. Unfortunately, we did not qualify for any of the Covid support grants available. We would therefore like to apply for any funding available from the Parish Council.</p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>	
<p><b>6.2 Red Lodge Conservation Group</b></p>	<p>The Covid pandemic has had an impact on the activities of the Red Lodge Conservation Group. Lockdown restrictions have cancelled our committee</p>	

meetings, although we have held a couple of on-site meetings with our link contacts at West Suffolk Council. We have continued our work parties when possible. The conservation work we do on Red Lodge Heath SSSI includes clearing encroaching vegetation, mowing paths, managing the habitats to benefit plants and insects, maintaining information boards and clearing litter.

One of the main challenges the Conservation Group faces is the way the heath is treated by some residents. Discarded litter is a regular issue, and there has been fly-tipping and damage to fencing in the area near White Mullein Drive. In the second lockdown a firework party was held on the site, and the rubbish left behind included unused fireworks, packaging and a fire extinguisher. A picnic in the summer left rubbish including broken bottles which had to be cleared away. These activities cause disturbance and harm to wildlife and degrade the site. We have asked our link Council members for signs to encourage responsible use of the SSSI and would appreciate any assistance the Parish Council can give in this area.

It is important that residents recognise why the heath is important and why it is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It is the location of many rare insects, particularly bees and beetles, and some plants found only in the Breckland area. It is also the remaining 10% of Red Lodge Warren which was used from medieval times for raising wild rabbits for their meat and fur, so it is of historic interest.

The Red Lodge Conservation Group work hard to care for the heath, but those involved in the work parties are all of retirement age and we hope to encourage new members to join us to continue to preserve the heath as a beautiful wildlife site for everyone to enjoy. Our work parties take place on the first Saturday of the month for around a couple of hours, in which we can make quite an improvement to the environment. It is a good opportunity to enjoy being out of doors and to appreciate what the site has to offer in terms of wildlife.

**Noted**

### 6.3 Lightwave Voluntary Group

#### **Introduction to Lightwave**

In September 2019 the Church took a decision to offer financial provision for churches across England to regenerate the church's role in every community.

- Red Lodge Hub: serves 14 local rural villages
- Four paid local staff + 20+ volunteers
- Offer support to all – practical, social, mental health & spiritual
- Started September 2019
- Refocused March 2020 – COVID

Now: getting back to the 'New Normal'

#### **Collaboration**

Lightwave have collaborated with the following organisations:

- Parish and District Council, West Suffolk & Suffolk Council
- Community Action Suffolk, local schools, Reynard Surgery & churches
- Suffolk Chamber of Commerce

#### **Financial Support was received from the following organisations:**

Parish Council

District Council  
Alfred Williams Trust  
West Suffolk Community Chest  
Hope Beyond (All Churches Trust)  
DWP Winter grants  
Fairshare – food supplies  
CAS – food & toiletries  
Newmarket festival – food supplies  
Total funds £26 000 as well as Food & toiletries

**Community Benefits:**

**COVID Response**

We would like to say thank you to the Parish Council as well as the District Councillors for their substantial financial contribution which enabled Lightwave to respond to the challenges and needs presented during the COVID pandemic.

With the support received from the Parish and District councillors we have been able to deliver over 2000 prescriptions of medicine to people who were told to isolate. At the height of the pandemic, nearly 800 food parcels were delivered across 13 villages.

With the contribution of residents in Red Lodge, the Lightwave Café provide free school meals for families during half term when government funding was reduced. We are hugely encouraged by the collective efforts of the residents and councillors, evidence that we are stronger together.

**Community Needs & Future Plans**

The pandemic highlighted the continued need for ongoing support.

- Unemployment, isolation and loneliness escalated since COVID.
- Young people challenged to find work.
- Antisocial behaviour and County Lines rising
- More accessible and safe community spaces for the youth and elderly
- More space for community groups as population increases

In response to these community needs, Lightwave have converted a shipping container gifted by Crest Nicholson into a Food Bank which continues to feed 309 people in Red Lodge each month. We have seen a gradual increase of families in need over time. Food & Baby Bank includes fuel vouchers from the winter fund.

Responding to the creating a safer and healthy community we secured a block booking for the events room at the sports pavilion. The benefit for the community has been the

- Pop up café where people can meet socially –
  - The Café also serves the local teams who use the Sports Pavilion and has hosted the annual football awards for one of the local football club in Red Lodge.
  - During hot summer days of training the café has provided free ice cream to the children using the football fields.
- The proceeds of the café are reinvested into the local community
  - Over 400 children have benefitted from the various seasonal events and weekly clubs that include

- Free holiday and after school clubs
  - Free Youth Club
- Money and debt management courses
- Parenting courses
- We are participating in the governments Kick Start program.
  - This creates opportunity for paid employment for people aged between 16 and 23 for six months, to get work experience and training.
- We work alongside the school offering support and activities for parents and children.
  - We are in the process of raising funds to pay for a library building at the local school in Red Lodge.
  - Many children will benefit from the library which will also offer reading support from the Lightwave volunteers
- We are in negotiation with Suffolk Council to distribute free COVID rapid self-test kits for those who need it in the village.

### **Challenges**

Some of the challenges we face

- Own Premises rather than paying rent
- Available land but: ownership, planning permission
- Finances to build & equip
- Timescales

### **Future sustainability**

We have explored several options for permanent premises.

- Proposed portion of the designated land from Crest Nicholson next to the allotment.
  - Head of planning has indicated that there is a legal requirement for this land to be used as open space.
- Proposed new community centre planned for the development on the northern land near The Pines School this is a 3 to 5-year plan currently being negotiated.
- Previously request was made to hire the events room on a permanent basis with a provisor that Lightwave would serve the sports teams that use the fields – This was not a suggestion that was received favourably by the Parish Council
- Exploring the possibility of a temporary modular build as an interim solution pending the northern development option. The placement of this would need to be discussed and agreed.

We want to work with the councillors and local groups to address these issues so that we can continue to build healthy communities where people feel valued, safe and have purpose and opportunity

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank the local community for their continued support and contribution to this work. The work over the past eighteen months has been recognised by H.M. Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk awarding Lightwave and volunteers the Lord Lieutenant's special certificate of Merit for our remarkable contribution and for being a shining example of all that is best in this county.

<p><b>6.4</b></p>	<p><b>Brownies/Rainbows</b></p> <p>In 2018 a taster session for The Brownies and Rainbows proved successful. The group launched in September 2018 and fully opened in January 2019. A lack of interest for outdoor meetings meant that they were unable to operate during the Covid-19 lockdown and have not met for 1 year. The group has now secured a venue and hope to restart soon.</p> <p>The group had to pay for the census approximately £600, they were however unable to make an income during the lockdown. Brownies and Rainbows hope to receive the support of the Parish Council.</p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Confirmation of the Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019.</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Red Lodge Annual Parish Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chairman.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p> <p><b>8.1</b></p> <p><b>8.2</b></p>	<p><b>Public Session – General questions &amp; discussion</b></p> <p>Cllr. Kovacevic expressed her gratitude and thanked the National Lottery for a donation of £4000 and the local people for their support in organising The Sports Taster Day. (Note: Cllr. Kovacevic left the meeting at 18:40)</p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <p>Following a request from Lightwave, the Parish Councillors and District Councillors agreed to meet with Lightwave to discuss the needs of the Red Lodge community and how these can be sustained.</p> <p>Premises are a problem for all three community groups, (Lightwave, Red Lodge Scouts and Red Lodge Brownies/Rainbows). Lightwave require committed premises to continue assisting the growing needs of the community. The Red Lodge Scouts require secure land which is fenced, this will allow their outdoor activities to take place safely.</p> <p>A discussion was held regarding the allotment land with a possibility for the parish council to divide this land to offer such groups. Also discussed was placing a temporary building on the land.</p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>	<p>Chairman</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Confirmation of the date for the next Annual Parish Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b></p> <p>The date for the meeting above was confirmed.</p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:56.