



OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE

Residents may well be aware that Preston City Council have fixed its proportion of the Council Tax for the year 2017/18. Residents, however will not be aware that discussions have already taken place concerning the Preston City Council budgets for 2018/19 relating particularly to the maintenance of the city green open space and playgrounds.

A few weeks ago all local parish councils were invited to a meeting to discuss a proposal that each parish council should contribute in some way to the maintenance costs of their open space and playgrounds. It was suggested that this could be done, either by direct monetary contribution from the parishes or, by parishes taking over the management / maintenance of specific areas possibly with the transfer of legal ownership of any land concerned.

The reason for this approach is to reduce the maintenance costs of Preston City Council since these are under severe pressure from the reduced funding that is currently available to it. In reality, this would transfer costs from Preston City Council and load them onto local parishes. We were told that unless PCC can find ways to reduce its maintenance costs it might need to reduce its level of service to the minimum required to satisfy Health & Safety requirements. This may mean that grassed areas would only be cut three times a year and, that some playgrounds might be in danger of being closed.

Lea and Cottam Parish Council had initial discussions at its last meeting and now await a full list of the open space areas and playgrounds that exist within its area. Until that information is received, together with replies to pertinent questions raised regarding the proposals, no decisions will be taken by your Parish Council.



LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE FUTURE OF YOUR AREA ?

Parishes have been around for a long time and are the smallest areas of civil administration in England, providing the statutory tier of local government closest to the people.

Parish Councils are the essence of local democracy and have a vital role in speaking and acting on behalf of the communities they represent. They may comment on planning applications. Here in Lea & Cottam we undertake a range of responsibilities which includes the maintenance of our own land, enhanced services that supplement those carried out by Preston City Council, the provision of funding for 'not for profit' groups and the improvement of the aesthetic appearance of the area by maintaining our small garden areas, hanging baskets and planters. We are also involved with the changes that are going on in and around our parish and have contributed, by representation, to the major developments that are taking place at the present time, something that will continue for the foreseeable future.

There are, like with most organisations, rules and regulations to be followed however training is available so that Councillors can become familiar with the way councils work. Councillors contribute to the work of the Council by:

- Having a say about local issues
- Putting forward ideas for better services in the area
- Responding to the needs and views of their constituents
 - Acting within the law
 - Seeking the best outcomes to local issues
 - Accepting the corporate view of the Council

There are currently vacancies on Lea and Cottam Parish Council

Why not contact the Clerk and put yourself forward for consideration?

NO PRECEPT RISE FOR 2016/17

At the meeting in December the Parish Council confirmed that there will be no increase in the Precept for 2017/18. The Parish Council will still be able to undertake the enhanced maintenance works that it has been doing for the last few years by way of the Lengthsman and his assistant. The hours of the Lengthsman's Assistant have been increased for the coming year. These works have added greatly to the tidiness and cleanliness of the Parish. They will also maintain our garden areas and parts of Miller Green, although the main grass cutting arrangements are expected to remain with 'Sandersons' who have done such a good job in the last three years. The Lengthsmen will continue to take care of our hanging baskets in Lea Town and the planters installed on Blackpool Road including the raised bed situated on Blackpool Road as you enter the built up area of Lea from the west. In addition the grass cutting of the 'greens' in the Dodney Drive area will continue to be done by them. Any resident who identifies 'grot spots' that we may be able to deal with should contact the Clerk to the Council for further guidance.

MILLER GREEN



The garden / notice board area of Miller Green has now been refurbished. We have received some very positive comments on its appearance. We have also reduced the height of the hedge on that corner to improve visibility for drivers exiting from Miller Lane onto Hoyles Lane. Residents will be aware from previous newsletters that the Council have established a 'working group' to look at the potential to expand the use of Miller Green for the benefit of residents.

With that in mind and, following comments from residents, the Council has reviewed its policy which currently restricts dog walkers from using this valuable community open space. With effect from April of this year dog owners will now be allowed to exercise their dogs on Miller Green and the current restriction notices will be removed.

In order to assist dog owners in removing dog faeces and to alleviate any concerns in this respect three new litter/dog bins will be installed at strategic points on the green. An existing stile will also be removed and replaced with a new wooden gate to aid access. The litter bins will be emptied as part of our Lengthsman's duties on a weekly basis, he will also periodically undertake a general inspection of the green.

These new arrangements have been put in operation for a trial period of 12 months during which time monitoring will take place to ensure that dog owners act responsibly now that they have been given the opportunity to use this local open space facility. It has been confirmed that the land does fall under PCC's Dog Control Orders that means offenders may receive fines for not removing their dog's faeces.

Dog owners using Miller Green will be expected to act responsibly and remove their dog's faeces - failure to do so will result in possible fines, the future removal of the facilities and the reinstatement of the previous restriction - it is up to you to protect the new arrangements.

The working group are looking at the potential for further enhancements to encourage use of the green by residents in the area. Some of the suggestions put forward so far include:

A central closely mown grassed area which might be used by children to play ball games and so forth.

The creation of a diagonal pathway across the green to enable easier access from one corner to the other.

The creation of additional garden / planted areas which will enhance the appearance of the green itself.

Any enhancements will of course need to be paid for however, this is unlikely to impact the Council Precept. Lea and Cottam Parish Council are due to receive funds from the Community Infrastructure Levy (lawful developer contributions due to the Council as a result of development). It is expected that this CIL money will pay for any agreed enhancements since it cannot be used for day to day revenue expenditure.

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Ken Brizland 13 Greenside Cottam Preston PR4 0WA Tel 01772 739196
Alex Butler 11 Parkfield Drive Lea Preston PR2 1QY Tel 01772 727980
John Coward 56 The Gables Cottam Preston PR4 0LG Tel 01772 727574
Christian Fleming 18 Parkfield Crescent Lea Preston PR2 1QU Tel 728658
Ron Fleming 2 Campion Drive Lea Preston PR2 1QG Tel 01772 469296
Philip Helvin 3 Darkinson Lane Lea Town Preston PR4 0RJ Tel 01772 734578
Dave Lambert 867 Blackpool Road Lea Preston PR2 1QS Tel 01772 499798
Judith Parker 116 Hoyles Lane Cottam Preston PR4 0NB Tel 01772 769812
Avril Roulston 42 Miller Lane Cottam Preston PR4 0ND Tel 01772 728493

CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

W V MCENNERNEY-WHITTLE
7 BILSBOROUGH MEADOW
PRESTON PR2 1YY
TEL 01772 733829
E-MAIL: leaparishcouncil@hotmail.com
WEB SITE: <http://www.leacottam-pc.gov.uk>

GRANT FUNDING

The Parish Council continue to maintain a small budget to assist, by way of grant, 'not for profit' groups within the community. These grants that are generally restricted to amounts up to £200 must be used for a specific purpose which is clearly identifiable. If your group is wishing to undertake a project and might need assistance please contact the Clerk to the Council who can give guidance on how to apply and, let you have a copy of the Council's Grant awarding policy that will help you put forward your application

MEETING DATES FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ARE:

8TH MAY 2017 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE
10TH JULY 20167 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE
11TH SEPTEMBER 2017 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

ALL MEETINGS COMMENCE AT 7.30PM