

Minutes of the meeting of Moulton Parish Council held at Moulton School on Monday 24th September 2018 at 6.00 pm.

Present	Cllrs	W Rampling Chairman	D Clarke
		P Collin	T James
		M Price	R Wallwork
		D James	
		Rachel Webb	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – C Cllr Robin Millar (received by the Clerk after the meeting).

ALSO PRESENT – the Clerk, District Councillor Roger Dicker, the Chairman of Kentford PC and 4 members of the public.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST – Cllr Douglas James (planning application – tree works The Priory.)

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Cllr James advised that 2 additional volunteers would be joining the speed watch team. Several checks had been undertaken and a significant number of vehicles had been recorded at high speeds. Tim James would be reporting the findings to the PCSO with a request for additional official speed checks in the village. Concern was raised regarding the number of cars leaving the Packhorse Inn and driving at speed up Bridge Street to the road junction. The Chairman confirmed that he would be arranging with Tim James for the VAS sign to be relocated to the Dalham Road. It was viewed necessary to consider the purchase of a second unit, and this would be a budgetary decision later in the year. In the meantime D Cllr Roger Dicker was asked if he would consider grant aid towards the purchase price.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2018 had been circulated, and it was unanimously agreed that these should be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

All covered under agenda items.

COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

It was regretted that C Cllr Robin Millar was not in attendance to progress the many outstanding issues which were still causing considerable concern and frustration due to the lack of response from CC officials.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

Safe active travel path - including request for a 30 mph speed restriction on B1085 between the parish boundary and the School and a safe walkable route from the School to Kentford.

Copies of the emails the Chairman had sent on 20th July and 31st July to Cllr Mary Evans, the Cabinet Member for Highways, on the need for a 30 mph speed restriction and a safe walkable route had been circulated.

Following her attendance at the July Council meeting Mrs Fiona Unwin had been in contact with Matt Hancock MP who had kindly agreed to lend his support for the much-needed safe route from the school to Kentford and onwards to Kennett railway station.

He had agreed to visit Moulton on Friday 12 October at 11.00am to discuss the project and to receive a copy of the petition which had been signed by approximately 500 villagers. The Head Teacher had been asked if some pupils could be involved in the photo shoot planned with the Newmarket Journal to raise the profile of the initiative.

The Chairman of Kentford Parish Council confirmed that he would ask a member of his Council to be present, and he would also be inviting parishioners to sign the petition.

The Clerk was asked to thank Mrs Unwin for arranging this meeting which it was hoped would progress plans for the overdue project to connect the villages, provide a safe route and an active travel pathway.

Chippenham Road – drainage issues

A site meeting had been arranged on 13th August with Cllr Robin Millar, the Vice Chairman, the Highways Engineer and the resident from 24 Chippenham Road to discuss the ongoing drainage and flooding problems.

Despite the Highways Authority having been advised of the issues on numerous occasions, to date the flooding had been judged as not meeting the County Council's threshold for action. It had been demonstrated by numerous photos that there was a serious defect.

At the site meeting the Engineer advised that she would have to go back and start by ordering a Flowline to establish if the gulleys were clear. She would then submit a report, to be considered by a separate drainage team. Only then would a camera inspection, which costs £1,500 per visit, be considered and this would need to be prioritised.

The Chairman had contacted both Cllr Robin Millar and Cllr Mary Evans, the Portfolio Holder suggesting that it was unacceptable for this longstanding problem to have to go through all the initial assessments and processes as if this were a newly reported defect.

The Parish Council strongly supported the parishioner and his request that this be dealt with as a matter of priority. The situation in which his property had been placed for so long was quite intolerable and could not be left at risk of further flooding any longer, neither could children en route to school continue to be drenched by passing vehicles after every period of rainfall.

It was regretted that there had been no contact from the CC Highways engineer since the site meeting. Cllr Robin Millar had advised that he was looking into this, although to date he could not explain why there had been no response to the emails.

New Grit Bin Process

The Chairman reported that the Council had received a 13 page emailed document (previously circulated) which advised Parish Councils on what the County Council would no longer do during periods of severe winter weather. The previous system had worked well. Rural parishes installed some grit bins at their own cost, which were filled and topped up on a regular basis, and if routine fill ups were not sufficient in extreme conditions a phone call alerted the office that more stocks were needed. In addition, grit heaps were provided and re-stocked at high risk locations on rural roads and village locations. Grit heaps would no longer be supported by the CC, and parishes would have to apply for permission to purchase

a grit bin. If 25 conditions could be met the parish may be permitted to go ahead and get a bin.

It was unclear whether existing grit bins met the CC revised criteria and would be automatically filled before the start of winter and refilled as previously. The County already had a list of Moulton 'volunteers', which was updated annually, who were authorised to spread grit during periods of severe weather.

In an effort to get clarity the Clerk had emailed the Highways Authority on 29th August, and having received no response had asked Cllr Millar to make enquiries on the Council's behalf. It was agreed that supplies of grit would be required in St Peters Avenue/Close and at the junction of Maltings Close/Newmarket Road, and the Clerk was asked to complete the forms to commence the procedure for the required consents in advance of purchasing 2 grit bins. In addition it was suggested that the Council contacted the owner of Moulton Manor Farm to ask if he would be prepared to install a grit bin at the farm entrance on Primrose Hill, to facilitate the movement of vehicles travelling up and down Gazeley Hill during freezing conditions.

There had been no update from Cllr Millar on the **Newmarket Road** – realignment and resurfacing – had this been programmed for some future date in the next financial year?

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Maintenance of Public Open Spaces and Trees

The Clerk emailed the Parks & Infrastructure Manager, Simon Collin 3 times regarding the grass cutting service which was now being provided 'in-house' by the District Council. Whilst accepting that this had been an unseasonably hot and dry summer, the Council was concerned by the changes to the regime. The Clerk had asked for an assurance that the previous policy of strimming on a regular basis after each cut would continue, and would not be removed from the contract. Also, what safeguards had been put in place to protect wildlife and pets from the use of weed killer spray, and were staff fully aware of the planters and other floral displays located around the village, some in close proximity to street furniture and posts? It was regretted that no response had been received to these enquiries and it was suggested that the department was understaffed, and concerns should be raised with D Cllr David Bowman, member with responsibility for operations, with a request that he visit Moulton to discuss the frequency and quality of the service now undertaken by the Authority.

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

The Strategic Housing Manager had replied to the Clerk advising that Flagship had confirmed that they were willing to renew the local agreement, which was produced following the concerns regarding the disposal of properties in Moulton. So far as the request to extend it beyond Moulton to the neighbouring villages, they were not minded to agree as they felt that this would set a precedent for housing they owned in other villages across West Suffolk.

The Council was of the view that this was an unacceptable approach, which did not promote self help and support, with the aim of housing the elderly and frail in close proximity to family members. With cut backs to the provision of social services and pressures on the NHS it was essential that the local authority's social housing policy gave priority to families with local links. The Chairman reported that the issue had been raised at the Area SALC meeting

and other parish representatives felt equally strongly about this, and believed it should be more widely promoted and advertised.

It was agreed that the concerns should be raised with D Cllr Robin Millar in his capacity as member for Families and Communities.

The future of local Government in West Suffolk

The Chairman had completed the Civic Leadership Review questionnaire on behalf of the Council, who were strongly against the creation of a Mayor to lead the new authority. He had also indicated that Moulton considered that all civic regalia should be abandoned, or paid for by the office holder and not charged to the public purse.

St Edmundsbury & Forest Heath Town and Parish Conference

The agenda for the meeting, fixed for Monday 15th October at 6pm, would be circulated soon.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Plans were presented and considered at the meeting for

The felling of 1 Ash Tree at The Priory Brookside DC/18/1648/TPO

15 Brookside – DC/18/1865/FUL – erection of 1 dwelling and detached 3 bay garages with residential annexe above (following demolition of existing bungalow and out buildings and replacement signage – Animal Health Trust DC/18/1732/ADV on boundary of Lanwades Park.

It was resolved to support the felling of the ash tree at **The Priory.**

15 Brookside - the applicant was present at the meeting, along with the neighbour from the adjoining property, who advised councillors that she fully supported the plans for the re-development of this site. It was unanimously agreed to support the application for the new dwelling etc as detailed in the plans.

Councillors were not happy with the proposed new **signs for the AHT** – the non illuminated signs were 8 foot wide, 4 foot high and the base of the board would be 5 foot above the ground. The signs which promoted their charity lottery were brightly coloured, and rather overwhelming, and it was viewed that the signs would be distracting to drivers on the B1056, in close proximity to the speed limit and outskirts of the residential developments in Kentford. The Clerk was asked to object to these new signs.

3 Park Close – single storey rear extension (following removal of existing conservatory) and **46 Lark Hill** – single storey side extension – plans had been circulated by email, as the closing date for comments was prior to the Council meeting, and it had been agreed that the Parish Council did not wish to comment on these applications.

Planning Determinations

Crown reduction – silver birch at 6 Church Road

2 dwellings at Plot 1 Drove End Milburn Drove – approved – but the plans can only be implemented by securing the piece of land owned by Long Acre to change the boundary line at the junction with Newmarket Road.

It was reported that the local authority had introduced a new policy regarding obtaining advice from a planning officer. There was now the possibility of a 3 month wait, and a charge of £48 would be made for a consultation. It seemed a retrograde move for rate payers and home owners, and Cllr Dicker was asked to follow this up, and suggest that a 3

month wait was not acceptable, neither a fee of £48 for a 10 minute consultation. In addition, the Clerk had been advised by a planning officer that West Suffolk would be phasing out the service of providing a hard copy of planning applications to Parish Councils. It was agreed that a hard copy was needed for consultation purposes at Council meetings, as many Councils did not have the equipment or resources to acquire a printer suitable of producing large scale plans.

Cllr Dicker supported the Council in their views and undertook to raise this with officers.

RENEWAL OF FOOTBALL CLUB LICENCES

The licences had been signed and the fees paid for the current season.

LAND REGISTRY - application to register rights of way to No 4 the Green.

The Clerk reported that the clause drafted by the Council and agreed by the solicitors acting for the owner of No 4 The Green could not be added to the application for the registration of the right of way. The legal advisor for the Land Registry had advised the Clerk that this was deemed to be a licence not an easement and would not be accepted by the Land Registry for the title documents. The notes of the Clerk's discussion with the lawyer had been circulated to members of the Council and the applicant. As an easement was a complicated legal document, which had to be drawn up by the applicant's lawyer and then approved by the Council's own legal advisor, and all costs would need to be met by the applicant. In view of this she decided to instruct her solicitor to withdraw the application to register the right of way as a matter of urgency, and proceed only with the first registration of No 4.

The Land Registry had confirmed that they would be advising the Council that the matter had been closed and no further action would be taken in respect of the right of way.

Track around the village green – demands for the annual contribution towards the upkeep of the tracks had been sent out at the beginning of September.

VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

Play Equipment

For some time the monthly assessment had reported that the Wicksteed 2 Bay flat swings were showing signs of damage and wear and the parts should be considered for replacement.

A quotation had been obtained and amounted to:-

5901F113 Flat Seat c/w Fixings For Standard Wicksteed Chains @ £40.00

4061-117 4061-117 @ £69.00

4064-007 Small Shackle, Bolt & Pin @ £6.00 each - x2 @ £12.00

2511-010 Ct10 Oilite Bush @ £1.30 each - x2 @ £2.60

Subtotal @ £123.60 per swing, plus VAT and carriage of £42.02.

It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should place an order for replacement parts for all 4 swings, and it was hoped that Councillors together with the help of the District Council's playground Inspector could install the new swings. Payment of the account was authorised on receipt of the goods.

The fixings on the climbing frame had been tightened by Cllrs Bill Rampling and Douglas

James although a defect was still recorded on the latest safety inspection report. The Chairman met the District Council's playground inspector on site to discuss, as the Parish Council did not have access to the necessary tools to deal with these non-standard bolts. It was agreed that the fixings did not create a risk, but in the meantime the Chairman had obtained the required tool to tighten the fixings.

A notification had been received from the District Council to advise that as from 1st April 2019 to align with St Edmundsbury the playground inspection service will be offered to all parish councils at no cost for the coming 2 years.

Grass covered mound – the Vice Chairman and Cllr Douglas James had installed mats which had been purchased at a total cost of £231.40 ex VAT. The ground had recovered well and they were thanked for carrying out this work.

The river bank – Ken Hutchinson had carried out a second cut in August the week before the Duck Race which took place on 26th August.

Dependent on weather conditions the Chairman and Cllr Douglas James were authorised to place an order for an autumn cut of the river bank should it be considered necessary.

Working Party – further clearance of the tree belt between playing field and meadow had taken place on 1st September.

Recycling Centre – village hall car park – the blue bin had been removed to prevent contamination and fly tipping around the bins.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Payment of Accounts - the Council confirmed and authorised the payment of the accounts presented at the meeting, as per the list detailing payments for the 2018/2019 financial year previously circulated and attached to the minute book.

Grant Aid – the annual S137 payment of £200 was authorised towards transport costs for the Newmarket Day Centre.

Review of Insurance cover and renewal of premium due on 1/10/2018 - details of the current cover and details of all risks property damage had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The insurance had been renewed in Oct 2017 with a 5 year long term undertaking.

The renewal premium due on 1st October including Insurance Premium Tax amounted to £858.69.

Councillors were asked to consider the All Risks schedule and the Clerk asked if the following adjustments should be considered.

Each item on All Risks cover had an excess of £100.00. The premium for the Nestor 90 grit bin valued at £100 was £0.60 and had been removed from cover.

The cost for insuring the Wayside seat valued at £150 was £0.99 and the Glasdon Dog Bin valued at £197 was £1.29. It was agreed that these 2 items should be removed from cover.

The premium to cover the recently converted BT Box for £1,000 would be £7.26, or £10.89 for £1,500. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the policy should be renewed with the amended cover and in addition the BT Box insured for £1,000.

On receipt of the amended renewal premium documents the Clerk was authorised to pay the premium.

Audit of Accounts – The Clerk/RFO advised that the 2017/2018 annual external audit had been satisfactorily concluded. The notice had been published along with the certified AGAR

Sections 1,2 & 3, and had been posted on the Financial Section of the Council's web pages. The invoice submitted by PKF Littlejohn for £300 plus VAT and been discharged

SUFFOLK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Chairman and Cllr Wallwork had attended the Area meeting on 11th September. The Chairman advised that there would now only be 2 Area meetings per year.

The first edition of the new E Newsletter – The Local Councillor Autumn 2018 edition had been circulated along with weekly E Bulletins. SALC was hoping to have better engagement with parishes in the future

The SALC AGM will take place on 6th November at Elmswell and councillors are encouraged to attend – the cost of the evening meal and travel expenses would be reimbursed by the Council.

The Chairman advised that he had been approached regarding the possibility of the purchase of a new village sign, which could be located on the piece of land at the junction of Bridge Street and the B1085. He hoped that this would be a combined village project with the necessary fund raising and research into the type and design.

It was reported that Godolphin had already installed the concrete base for the new seat to be installed on Brookside, on the river bank, in memory of their employee and Moulton resident. The family were very grateful for this memorial and the care and consideration which had gone into the planning for the location.

The next meeting of the Council was fixed for Monday 12th November at 6.30 at the School. There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed *Bill Rampling*

Date *12/11/2018*