

## **Minutes of the annual meeting of Moulton Parish Council held at Moulton School on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 6.30 pm.**

<b>Present</b>	W Rampling	
	D Almond	D Clarke
	M Price	Ed Chambers
	D James	Jane Horsnell*
	Ryan Bragg *	

### **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Bill Rampling, opened the meeting and asked for nominations for the Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year. Cllr D James proposed that David Almond be elected Chairman; this was seconded by Cllr David Clarke, and unanimously agreed. Cllr Almond signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and before retiring Chairman Rampling left the meeting, he was thanked on behalf of parishioners for his outstanding contribution over the years. Cllr Almond also asked that it should be placed on record the thanks of the newly formed Council for all the hard work and contribution to the smooth running of the parish by those who had stood down from office. Their input would be greatly missed.

Retiring Chairman Bill Rampling left the meeting.

The Council's policy to appoint the Chairman Proper Officer of the Council (first proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed on 30/08/2011) would continue under the new Chairmanship of Cllr Almond.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllr Tim James (excused due to previous commitment) and Cllr Robin Millar.

**ALSO PRESENT** – the Clerk, District Councillor Roger Dicker and 6 members of the public.

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – Cllrs Mark Price (member Vets Football Team) Cllr Douglas James (Playing Field & Village maintenance contract).

### **CO-OPTION OF 3 COUNCILLORS TO FILL THE CURRENT VACANCIES**

The Chairman advised that following the uncontested election, there were currently 3 vacancies to be filled by co-option. The following parishioners had put their names forward for consideration, and a brief resume of each of the prospective co-optees had been circulated. They were - Ryan Bragg, John Derry, Tim Forgett, Jane Horsnell and Linda Spinks. The Chairman proposed that the 5 nominated councillors present at the meeting should indicate by a vote which 3 out of the 5 candidates should be asked to join the Council by co-option.

3 of the candidates who were present were invited to either remain, or leave the room whilst the vote took place. They decided to adjourn with the Clerk, whilst the Chairman conducted the ballot in open Council.

\*\* By an overall majority Ryan Bragg, John Derry and Jane Horsnell were co-opted. The Chairman thanked all those who had put their names forward and suggested that the

unsuccessful candidates would have an opportunity to serve on the Council at some future date.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr James that Cllr Mark Price be appointed Vice Chair and this was seconded by Cllr David Clarke. There were no other nominees and it was unanimously agreed that Cllr Price be appointed.

All Councillors and prospective new members had received the following forms:-

Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Suffolk Local Code of Conduct adopted by Moulton Parish Council on 21/7/14

Register of Interest and guidance notes.

The Declaration of Interests needed to be completed and a copy returned to the District Council offices by the end of the month for publication on their website.

All nominated and co-opted councillors had signed their acceptance of office form prior to the commencement of other business.

#### **REPRESENTATIVES ON VILLAGE CHARITIES/BODIES**

The following were elected to serve as detailed below, for the ensuing year:-

<b>Church &amp; Bridges Charity</b>	D James & W Rampling
<b>Fuel Land Josling Bequest Charity</b>	W Rampling & Rachel Webb
<b>Village Hall Management Committee</b>	Ryan Bragg & David Clarke
<b>Finance Working Group</b>	David Clarke had agreed to serve, along with the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
<b>Playing Field Working Group</b>	David Almond, Mark Price and Douglas James

#### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> February and 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 had been circulated, and it was unanimously agreed that these should be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

**MATTERS ARISING** from the February and April meeting – none - all covered under the agenda items.

**COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS – in the absence of the County Councillor the Clerk reported the following:-**

#### **HIGHWAY MATTERS**

**Chippenham Road** - on 18<sup>th</sup> April the Flowline team were in the village carrying out the annual drain clear. They had not been instructed of the need to clear the pipe which drains into the field on Chippenham Road in the vicinity of No 24. The property owner had raised this with the Flowline representative who advised that they would be willing to tackle this but would need authorisation from the County Council. He contacted the Highways Authority and fortuitously the Cabinet Member had picked up the message. Flowline were asked to deal with the blocked pipe. Despite the previous endeavours by members of the Parish Council who had removed a lance, there was still a blockage as the drain quickly fills and causes ponding on the road, with extensive runoff into the garden of No 24. Flowline were unable to clear the drain and advised that the blockage was of a much harder

composition than the usual mud and silt, and a camera survey would need to be commissioned to investigate further.

The resident from No 24 had sent another detailed letter to the Drainage Team at the County Council (copy to Cllr Millar) outlining the history of the drainage issues here, and requesting that priority be given to a camera inspection with a view to removing the blockage. It was suggested that a drill should be brought on site with the camera to facilitate the clearance.

At the same time he had asked the Clerk to request that Godolphin, the adjoining landowner, be approached and asked to clear the overgrown vegetation from the drain into the ditch.

**School Road** – on 14<sup>th</sup> November the Parish Council first reported that the road was flooding after heavy rain due to surface water accumulating as it failed to run off into the adjoining field from the ditch opposite the School gate. The ditch required clearing with a digger. The gullies, and catch pits in the area near the school were all cleansed and jetted on 11<sup>th</sup> January and Robin Millar advised on 14<sup>th</sup> January that the contractor had confirmed the need to re-attend, having applied for an emergency road closure.

Flooding had not been an ongoing problem due to the lack of rain, however the Clerk had contacted the Cabinet Member to advise that the ditch had not been attended to, neither had the missing road markings outside the school gate, which should highlight the road crossing to the carpark, nor the uneven road surface repaired adjacent to the kerb. (Reported on 19<sup>th</sup> March).

C Cllr Mary Evans advised that Robin Millar was aware of these issues and would be following them up, noting the need to try to co-ordinate the works.

#### **B1085 Safe Pedestrian Route/Active Travel Path**

Hopefully the traffic count will be carried out on the B1085 shortly after the bank holiday weekend, and the CC will then proceed and re-open the request to extend the speed limit, taking into account that this is an exception site for all the reasons previously listed.

Robin Millar had been asked to check if Belinda Godbold had been progressing the issues currently under review for the safe walkable route between Moulton & Kentford with a view to a meeting in June.

**Newmarket Road** – realignment and resurfacing – had this been programmed for some future date in the next financial year?

**B1085 Dalham Road** – road closure – details of a traffic closure planned from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May from 9am to 4pm for repairs to the road surface in preparation for road surfacing later in the year had been circulated

**Details of the 2019 Seasonal Grass Cutting programme** had been circulated – the B1085 grass verge was due to be cut on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Further details could be obtained from the Customer Service Contact Centre on 0345 606 6171.

**Parish Highways Self Help Scheme** – was being launched at an event on 15<sup>th</sup> May at Stowmarket. It would detail options to focus on community self help in areas such as sign cleaning, weed killing and grass cutting.

It was resolved that Cllrs David Clarke and Douglas James would represent the Council and report back.

#### **DISTRICT COUNCIL**

It was reported that the serving Councillor Roger Dicker, standing for the West Suffolk Independent Party had been re-elected with a sizeable majority.

The Chairman welcomed and congratulated Cllr Dicker and asked if he had any matters he wished to raise. Cllr Dicker advised that due to the elections there were no current updates, but he would be happy to represent the parish, and follow up any concerns councillors may wish to raise with him.

### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

#### **6 Church Road DC/19/0840 – application to fell one birch tree**

Plans had been circulated and it was unanimously agreed that the Council wished to make no comments on the application.

**DETERMINATIONS** – tree works at 14 Church Road had been approved.

**PLANNING AUTHORITY'S NEWSLETTER AND USER GUIDE FOR CONSULTEE ACCESS** had been circulated.

**LAND AT HATCHFIELD FARM** – the Public Enquiry to re-consider all the facts presented at the earlier hearing was due to commence on 8<sup>th</sup> May and would last 12 days. Bill Rampling had offered to represent the rural parishes (in his capacity as Moulton PC's delegate on the RPA for Hatchfield Farm only) should they wish his further input, although he was away for the start of the hearing

**KENNETT GARDEN VILLAGE** – it was reported that East Cambs District Council took the decision on 24<sup>th</sup> April to grant outline planning approval for 500 homes despite local opposition. The size of the village of Kennett will increase by more than 300%. Fears regarding the failure to provide the necessary infrastructure prior to development and in particular address highway concerns appeared to have been disregarded. Phase 1 of the build will see 240 homes and a new primary school built before 2024.

The impact on the surrounding villages as a result of this development, and the increased congestion was a major issue. The RPA had raised concerns and villagers were of the view that further pressure was needed to raise the profile on the urgent need for an A14/A11 link. Bill Rampling had sent an email to all the RPA members suggesting that those parish representatives who wish to get involved should co-ordinate a plan, and put forward a direct route, taking into account the effect this would have on longer term development. To legitimise this, a meeting would need to be held so that a strategy could be formalised and agreed by all interested parties. The Chairman of Kentford Parish Council had offered to co-ordinate a pressure group to highlight the issues, and D Cllr Roger Dicker agreed to raise this with him. The Chairman indicated that he would be happy to represent Moulton should a meeting be held to follow this up. It was also suggested that at some stage the concerns should be brought to the attention of Matt Hancock MP.

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** – the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April had been circulated and it was unanimously agreed that these should be approved, but would not be signed until the next APM.

A member of the public had asked if it were possible to have another first aid course, CPR demonstration and training on the use of the Defibrillator. The Village Hall would be a suitable venue and the availability and cost of courses was being investigated.

The Clerk had approached the Wayleaves Manager at UK Power concerning the Moulton Fuel Land charities annual receipt. It had been suggested at the annual parish meeting that a substantial one off payment could be made instead of the current annual receipt - £69.68

was the latest payment received in November 2018. The Clerk was asked to contact UK Power later in the year in order that they could look into a new termed agreement.

### **VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

It had previously been resolved that Packhorse Fencing's rate for village cuts would be increased by RPIx. The increase for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March was 2.4% and it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the rate should be increased from £413.60 to £423.53 per cut. The weekly rate for inspecting the play equipment remained unchanged at £11.50 per week. The Clerk was authorized to discharge Packhorse Fencing invoices as submitted during the forthcoming year.

It was suggested that another maintenance day needed to be fixed to continue the clearance on the tree belts around the playfield, and undertake maintenance on the play equipment etc. Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June was fixed and all those willing to help out were invited to meet at the village hall at 9am.

The metal road bridge by the Church was deteriorating badly as a result of neglect by the County Council. In an effort to prevent further decay of the structure and improve the visual impact which reflected badly on Moulton's usual high standards, it was suggested that Dale Burch be asked for his professional advice on treatment of this metal structure, in close proximity to a watercourse.

**Maintenance of public footpaths** – the Clerk was asked to check with the County Council when it was programmed to cut back the vegetation on public footpaths – in particular the much walked route from the Church to Dalham along the river bank, and from The Street to Lark Hill.

**Village Green** – a complaint had been received from a villager regarding the transfer of the goal posts to the Green when the playing field was being rested or undergoing seasonal maintenance. She had pointed out that she and some other villagers had real concerns over their location, and suggested that there were a number of safety and social issues surrounding the use at this location due to the playing of loud music, loutish behaviour, foul language and deposits of rubbish.

She had sent an email for consideration at the meeting and this had been circulated.

She asked that the practice of placing the goal posts on the Village Green for extended periods throughout the Spring and Summer be stopped – as siting the goal posts here had created an unsafe, unpleasant, antisocial and intimidating environment, due to the use of the facilities by youths, many arriving by car presumably from outside the village. The concerns were discussed and councillors were unanimous in their view that anti-social activity of the type described was totally unacceptable. However, it was agreed that the Council could not prevent those from outside the village using the facilities on a public open space. If the goal posts were removed this would discriminate against the majority of well mannered children who benefit from the facilities for outdoor exercise.

It was unanimously agreed that parish councillors, and in particular members of the playing field working group (the Chairman, Vice Chairman Mark Price and Douglas James), would approach anyone seen acting in an irresponsible manner, and they would be asked to moderate their behaviour and be respectful of villagers and residents in the vicinity. It was hoped that this low key approach would have the desired effect and this understated intervention would defuse the situation. It was suggested that any concerned resident who witnessed disruptive and disorderly behaviour should contact a member of the Playing Fields Working Group to intervene.

If at any time it was deemed essential by the working group to remove the goal posts for any period of time, authority was given to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr James to take the decision to purchase the necessary locks and chains to secure the equipment to the side of the playing field. It was unanimously agreed that this was an extreme measure and it was hoped that this would not prove necessary.

**Playing Field** – Lawnhopper would be carrying out the treatment on 16<sup>th</sup> May, as approved at the April meeting and the Clerk was authorised to effect payment on completion.

**Play Equipment** – the April inspection report had been circulated.

It was suggested that the algae and moss on the picnic table should be treated, and the corrosion on the upright supports and cross over bar of the cradle swings should be treated and repainted. This work was programmed to take place on the next parish volunteer working party day on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**The river bank** – the Clerk was asked to contact Ken Hutchinson and request that he liaised with Cllr Douglas James in order to carry out the spring cut of the river bank following the departure of the nesting birds. On completion of the cut, the Clerk was authorised to pay his account.

## **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 2019/2020 financial year, attached to the minute book.

**Applications for financial assistance** – the following grant payable under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 was approved:-

Moulton PCC Churchyard Account – Grant for Churchyard Maintenance £1,250.00

**Audit of Accounts** – Mr David Unwin had carried out the yearend audit, and had completed the section on the annual return. The Council resolved to make their annual donation of £25 in tokens in lieu of remuneration for his work as Internal Auditor for the Council, which would be drawn from the Chairman's allowance.

The Clerk/RFO advised that the annual return would be sent off to the external auditors and the period for the exercise of public rights had been published, and would run from 03/6/19 to 12/7/19. A copy of the accounting statement, noting that it was unaudited and subject to change, and a copy of the annual governance statement had also been published.

**Update on Insurance Claim** – still awaiting an update on the claim. The Clerk had been in contact with the Council's insurers, Zurich and the Claims adviser employed to negotiate with the third party. Quotations for a replacement bench and installation had been obtained from Packhorse Fencing (£1350) and L Roberts & Son (£1,500).

### **Section 137 Grants 2019/20**

The following grants approved at the January meeting were confirmed

The Voluntary Network £100, Newmarket Day Centre £200, Moulton PCC – churchyard maintenance contribution £1,250, CPRE annual subscription £36, Our Special Friends donation £100, Magpas £100, Parish Archivist contribution towards materials and costs £100.

## **SUFFOLK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

Details of the new SALC website and the logins for both this site and the members' area of NALC website had been circulated.

In addition, the Clerk had purchased copies of The Good Councillor's Guide 2018 and a copy had been passed to each member of the Council. The cost of £3.50 per copy, postage and VAT totalling £41 was duly approved.

The Chairman suggested that the new members considered attending one of the 2 training courses being offered by SALC – Councillor Briefings held at Horringer Community Centre of 10<sup>th</sup> June or Lakeneheath Pavilion on 18<sup>th</sup> June – 7pm to 9pm at a cost of £23 + VAT (3 places for the cost of 2). The 2 newly co-opted councillors were available to attend the briefing on 10<sup>th</sup> June, and the Clerk was to check whether Cllr Derry was free to accompany them.

In addition tailored training could be held in the parish at a cost of £220 + VAT for a 2 hour evening session or 3 hour half day session at £270 + VAT. Details had been circulated, and it was resolved to hold the matter over and consider at the September meeting.

### **Routine Correspondence**

#### **School Car Park**

A resident had advised the Clerk that for the last few weeks the school car park gate had not been locked. The Parish Council, as the legal tenant, had a duty to ensure that the area was protected from intruders. It had previously been acknowledged that there were gaps to the right of the main gate which could be breached, and it was accepted that even locked gates would not be sufficient to prevent a determined act of illegal entry. However the Council and the School had to be seen to use their best endeavours to prevent illegal entry, and the Clerk had reminded the Head Teacher of the need to ensure the gates were padlocked out of school hours.

**Questions to Chairman** – the Vice Chairman suggested that consideration be given to marking Bill Rampling's greatly valued time on the PC with a plaque on the new bench at the Bridge Street cross roads – when finally installed following settlement of the insurance claim. It was unanimously agreed that this would be an appropriate gesture.

The Chairman was asked if councillors were aware that some residents were exercising their dogs on the School carpark in the evening. It was acknowledged that whilst many dog owners were totally responsible, there was always the risk that not all were conscientious and some may allow their dogs to foul the area. In the circumstances the Council felt that signs should be obtained stating that dogs were not permitted in the School Car Park. The Clerk was instructed to raise this with Mrs Shipp, the Head Teacher, to check that she was happy for the Council to install signs on the pedestrian gates, and the main vehicle gate.

**The next meeting of the Council was fixed for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 6.30 at the School. There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.**

Signed *David Almond*      Date *23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019*