

**DRAFT Minutes of the remote meeting of Moulton Parish Council held on  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 at 6.00 pm by video conference link.**

<b>Participating Cllrs</b>	D Almond - <b>CHAIRMAN</b>	David Clarke
	Jane Horsnell	Ryan Bragg
	Douglas James	Mark Price
	Tim James	John Derry
	Ed Chambers	

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman welcomed Laura Yates on her first day in post. He reported that Laura will be working with Lorraine during the coming month to familiarise herself with the management of Moulton prior to taking over as Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer of the Council on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**APOLOGIES** – District Cllr Roger Dicker

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST** – Cllr Mark Price (member Vets Football Club).

**ALSO PARTICIPATING** - County Cllr Andy Drummond, the Clerk, Laura Yates, & 1 member of the public.

**MINUTES** – copies of minutes of the meeting held on 6/7/2020 had been circulated. It was unanimously agreed that these could now be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

**COVID 19**

Cllr Tim James updated councillors. Currently there was little need for back up support for vulnerable villagers due to the easing of sheltering and social distancing measures, although the volunteers and representatives of the Community Resilience Group would be ready to deal with a spike in the pandemic if required. 2 claims had been received for re-imbursment for top up charges for the emergency response mobile phones.

**DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS**

**DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**In the absence of Cllr Dicker the Clerk reported on the following:-**

**Review - Public Space Protection Orders (Dogs) 2017**

An overview of the legislation has been circulated. The Council had previously taken the view that villagers should be allowed to access the playing field with dogs on leads. This decision was taken as some residents liked to meet up and sit on the park benches near the PO Stores with their pets. A total ban could be detrimental to the well-being of some elderly parishioners. It had been agreed that the status quo should remain. However, if at any time there were issues that the Parish Council could not resolve at a local level, the District Council could be asked to intervene to address anti-social issues relating to dogs.

Updates on the following from D Cllr Dicker had been circulated:-

**Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) project** - details had been circulated, including possible regional routes with the potential for a link from Newmarket Road Park and Ride (Cambridge) to Mildenhall. Further information and updates will be provided with details as the schemes emerge.

WSC councillors had passed the £110 million Weston Way development near ASDA in Bury St Eds. It will encompass Health, Leisure, Council and more all on one site.

The Pentagon had agreed to keep the refuelling arm at RAF Mildenhall (2500 airmen).

Parking concerns remain in Newmarket, especially around the All Saints area. The Council are looking to subsidise residents enabling parking in nearby car parks. A new rapid EV charger has been installed in All Saints carpark.

Newmarket Town Council have set up a working group to look at a new strategy for the whole of the town.

WSC will not be charging for street vending licences to help hospitality businesses and will allow table and chairs to be put out on the pavements.

WSC had mapped out a program of measures for carbon neutrality by 2030.

The Community Chest fund is open for local groups to help fund projects, and Cllr Dicker has locality money available too.

The EASTWEST RAIL CONSORTIUM have employed consultants STEER to look at the upgrade of the rail link from Ipswich to Cambridge.

The Risby wildlife project (to increase local biodiversity) was televised on Countryfile on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

The overdue works to roofing, gutters and drainage at the **Benfield Road** garage block were to be carried out on 14<sup>th</sup> September by the maintenance team (RFT) used by Flagship Housing. Contact number 0808 168 4555 OPTION 3.

**The empty property off Bridge Street** – the Clerk reported that heirs to the deceased owner had now been tracked down and it was anticipated that decisions would soon be taken regarding the future of this house.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – Cllr Andy Drummond was thanked for participating in the meeting.**

#### **HIGHWAYS AND THE SPEED LIMIT ALONG THE B1085**

The July & August County Council newsletters had been circulated. The July edition included details of additional funding for the County Council for emergency walking and cycling schemes. In May the Transport Secretary announced a £250m investment to make walking and cycling easier.

Cllrs Andy Drummond and Louis Busuttil were looking at the possibility of extending cycleways around Newmarket and Cllr Drummond had recommended that they try to establish a funded programme for this between Moulton and Kentford, before pushing any further for a speed limit along the full length of the B1085 between Moulton School Kentford, which local officers clearly did not support, as currently there was no cycleway here. The speed limit would follow on from the establishment of a cycle way.

He reported that the County Council were not prepared to fund the cost of implementation of the 40mph limit for the buffer zone from the School to public footpath No 4 along the B1085, although Mark Stevens (Assistant Director Operational Highways) had emailed him saying that he was prepared to commence the consultation process for this scheme.

Cllr Drummond advised that he was prepared to assist and allocate part of his locality budget for the project (estimated figure of £9,320.00) which would mean that the parish would be faced with a maximum liability of £5,000.00.

Councillors had never supported a 300 m buffer zone, being of the view that this would be a total waste of taxpayers money – if Moulton were to invest in a scheme it must afford protection to all who travel/walk or cross over the B1085 between Moulton and Kentford.

It was resolved that the Council would only be prepared to sanction the implementation of a buffer zone (at a maximum cost to Moulton parish of £5,000) if a clear assurance could be given that this would be the precursor to a funded safe walkable/cycle route along the whole length of the B1085 between the villages, and that the speed limit would then be extended to cover the whole route.

Cllr Drummond was thanked for his efforts thus far and asked to get an assurance from the Highways Authority before any further action was taken on the proposed buffer zone.

**Highway Issues - Parish Council response in blue – 8/6/2020 – still awaiting update**

The ongoing failure to communicate with the Parish Council on highway issues at a local level was still causing issues. The Clerk and Council was being directed to the clerical Customer Contact Centre on 0345 606 6171, or email [customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk). For the past 12 months the Chairman and Council had been requesting a key contact within the Highways Engineering Team – possibly the Area Officer, so that specific issues on Highway concerns could be discussed in detail.

**In particular the further and better details were still requested on the following – (PC comments in blue)**

**School Road - surface water.** The PC would like to know what is the intervention criteria which prevents the ditch being cleared out to enable surface water draining from the roadside outside the school gate during periods of heavy rain. High risk to all those accessing the school and crossing to car park and to the parking spaces on roadside layby. The PC will provide further photographic evidence of this flooding when it next occurs. Noted that a gully cleanse was carried out in Jan 2020. Parish Council working party cleared all the gullies on School Road on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019, and volunteers regularly remove blockages from the drains along School Road when passing by on foot.

**Report 236831 (19.3.2019) Pedestrian crossing marking and trip hazards at the school.** We have been informed that funds are now available. Can Highways provide timescales for this? This is not a recognised road marking and therefore will not be replaced by Suffolk Highways. The crossing from the School gate to the carpark is not 'unofficial' – it was deemed a safety measure which was put in place by the Highways Authority and should therefore be maintained to protect all those crossing this road where there is a high incidence of vehicles travelling at speed towards the School.

**Signage** in the area is generally poorly maintained. Reports 269258, 269504 (3.2.2020) School Road crossroads near Boys Grave. CC is not replacing the damaged sign at the crossroads. This increases the risk of road traffic accidents at this site. Will the PC be updated regarding the priority of these signs – when may we expect these to be replaced in view of the speed of vehicles travelling along the B1506 towards the Boys Grave junction with School Road. Moulton Road sign left rotting on verge (Ref 00255919 now a closed case). Road signs and posts demolished in collision and left in verge – reported under Ref 0026669258 on 3/2/2020 and Ref 277210 on 28/4/2020 – no longer on reporting tool – are these also closed cases, and how can the PC be reassured that these are still 'live issues' to be addressed? Another road traffic accident reported at the Boys Grave in August.

**Work efficiencies** - many parishioners comment on the piecemeal approach to repairing potholes and road markings. Work seems to be carried out in order of reporting, with no attempt to combine several jobs together when working in the area. Whilst it is appreciated that all issues must be logged on the reporting tool, it is difficult for the Parish Council and

parishioners to follow responses from Highways and track the status of individual issues. Can we draw down regular reports off the system? Do we need training to make more use of the tool?

The PC is not being updated. It is understood that all issues must be progressed via the reporting tool – but having logged specific issues, many drop off the system, and the PC is not being kept in the loop – for example Newmarket Road (Flint Cottages drainage – Ref 265808, 272860, 276861) reported in February and still highlighted with a red pin on the map indicating that a decision has not been made on the action to be taken. How does this reconcile with your comments that ‘resident has been visited and drainage scheme is in place and works planned for Aug/Sept 2020’. Should not the pin be yellow to indicate that works ordered? It is noted that there is insufficient capacity in the system to accept photographic evidence from mobile phones – this needs to be addressed.

We look forward to further enhancements to the tool which will enable regular updates to be passed to the Parish Council and County Councillor.

In July the Chairman asked for details of the proposed works which were to be carried out on the Newmarket Road in August and would result in road closures. We were never provided with details of the works being undertaken here, but on observation we gathered that some works (previously listed for action) to the drains outside Flint Cottages has been done, and there had been surface patching down to the village. If the surface from the 30mph sign to the B1085 junction is programmed for re-dressing we would like to remind officers that we have been told in the past that this section of road (on the walk to school route) has already been programmed for re-grading to reduce the amount of standing water.

Cllr Andy Drummond had been asked to follow up these outstanding issues and specifically the need for better communication with Lloyd Jones, the Communications and Customer Journey Manager at the Highways Depot and he advised that he would report back to the Chairman.

## **VILLAGE MAINTENANCE**

### **Tree works**

The Chairman reported that he had asked Mr Colin Price to undertake a basic H & S check of the trees on land owned by the PC. (Located on or around the perimeter of the Playing Field, and the adjoining Village Green, and along the riverbank adjacent to Brookside to the start of the Bridleway by the bottom entrance to the Church)

In addition, a recommendation had been requested for the future maintenance and planting schemes for the cleared tree belt between the playing field and meadow, the area along from the village hall, behind the Climbing Frame, and by the boundary wall of Jennings Barn, and the potential need for further clearance in the adjoining tree belt, between the lower end of the playing field and the village green.

**The riverbank** – it was agreed that as in previous years Ken Hutchinson would be asked to carry out an autumn cut of the bank at a cost of £340 plus VAT and the Clerk was authorised to discharge payment on completion.

Cllr Douglas James reported that he would get in touch with representatives from the Environment Agency to see when they would be attending to clear out the reeds from the riverbed.

### **Litter Pick and Village Maintenance working party fixed for 19<sup>th</sup> September at 9.30am.**

Due to Covid requirements details of the 'team leaders' (the Chairman, Vice Chairman Cllrs John Derry and Jane Horsnell, and Mrs Jill Goodwin) had been submitted to West Suffolk. Cllr John Derry had agreed to manage the event along with Jill Goodwin and 30 sets of litter picking equipment etc had already been delivered to him from West Suffolk.

The Council was required to read and comply with the guidance produced by Keep Britain Tidy

<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean/coronavirus-guidance>.

Main changes were that volunteers had to be in bubbles of up to 6 people including group leader. Bring your own gloves and hand sanitiser to the event. Disposal of the waste collected in your own bins. Grey bags with 'West Suffolk Council' logo on them could be put next to your bin, as side waste and the crew will pick it on your usual collection day; and bags must be left in situ for 72 hours prior to collection and the collection must be prearranged.

The West Suffolk Council's guide for volunteers could be accessed at

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/lwyl/arrangelitterpickgroup.cfm>.

As usual coffee and bacon rolls (supplied by the PO Stores) would be given to all volunteers, and the Council authorised re-imburement of this charge.

In order to advertise the event it was agreed to post a notice on Face Book and put up laminated signs in the village

### **PLAYING FIELD**

#### **REVIEW OF FOOTBALL LICENCES 2020/21**

The Licences had been agreed for both Clubs with their representatives. It was required that the Football Clubs establish good working relationships with the neighbouring property owners, and the Club representatives had undertaken to go and introduce themselves and see what could be arranged regarding the retrieval of stray balls. The Chairman had stressed that it was for the football clubs, not the Parish Council, to make arrangements with neighbours to recover lost balls.

The Council would continue to look at fencing options mainly to discourage people from trying to climb across the boundary to gain entry into the neighbouring property, and or/considering the practicalities and cost of erecting temporary netting during football activities to reduce the number of balls going astray.

**Proposed shelters** on the meadow side of the football field. A quote and detailed specification for £2,350.00 per shelter had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Ed Chambers was thanked for his work on designing and costing these covered benches. After some discussion on the suitability of these structures on a multi-purpose recreation ground, and future maintenance, it was agreed that Cllr Mark Price would in the first instance see whether funding was available to finance more than 50% of the cost, before asking councillors to re-consider the project in further detail.

#### **Picnic tables and seats**

2 picnic tables had now been delivered and placed on the Playing Field near the PO Stores. In addition the donated seat in memory of residents, who had lived on Chippenham Road for

over 50 years, had been delivered and Douglas James had undertaken to install this with a concrete base on behalf of the family.

In view of the ever increasing requests for memorial seats, the Chairman suggested that in future any donation must be considered by the Council at the time, and a suitable location agreed in advance.

#### **Outdoor Classes –**

The Clerk reported that all licence holders for outdoor classes on the Village Green and Playing Field had been advised that the Council needed to be mindful of parking and congestion issues caused by visitors driving into Moulton to join these classes.

During the month of August it had been possible for participants to park at the Village Hall, but from September the user groups had priority and approval was needed from the Bookings Clerk. It had been stressed to all licence holders that there must be no parking on the tracks around the Village Green, or on the Street near the PO Stores.

It was agreed to approve outdoor **yoga classes** under licence on the Village Green in September on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, Saturday morning 9-10am and on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September 11-11.30am.

**Vivo Outdoor Fitness** classes were continuing and Ben Blowes had requested a renewal of the licence from 1<sup>st</sup> October for classes from 9.45-10.45 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Preschool was re-opening at the Hall and there would be parents dropping off children every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9.00 am and again at 9.30 am. By delaying outdoor fitness by 15 minutes would allow participants to use the Hall carpark with prior approval of the Bookings Clerk.

It was unanimously agreed to approve the renewal of the outdoor fitness licence.

The **Pilates and Fitness** instructor, who for many years held classes in the Village Hall prior to lock down, had approached the Council regarding the possibility of using the playing field, until the village hall was open for classes again. She wished to run one or two classes weekly when the weather was fine and had undertaken to work around the existing classes and football training.

It was unanimously agreed to issue a licence at the usual fee of £25 per quarter for outdoor Pilates classes on the understanding that prior consent was obtained from the Village Hall bookings Clerk for permission to use the car park, and that the classes did not clash with other training or fitness groups.

A request to run Bootcamp classes had been received. The Clerk had asked for further information which had not been received by the time of the meeting. It was agreed that consideration should first be given to existing user groups and currently there was more than sufficient outdoor exercise activity in the village, and further requests would not be considered at the present time.

#### **Play Equipment – details of the latest monthly inspection had been circulated and the Annual Independent Play Area Report.**

There were a number of low risk comments and recurring issues from previous years which it had been agreed with West Suffolk's Playground Inspector, Tim McGhee, in October 2019 did not require attention.

However, there were loose fixings on the Climbing Frame and missing bolt covers on the Surfboard, and the Clerk had asked whether Tim McGhee would be able to deal with these on his monthly check of the play area.

In addition, it was reported that the fixing pins on the impact areas of the grass mats under the cableway should be removed.

It was recommended that the Council check with the supplier (Kompan UK) to find out the manufacturers recommendations for inspecting for damage and/ or internal rusting to ensure the continued safe use of the equipment, and the Clerk was awaiting an email back from Kompan's Contracts Manager Kieron Dowson.

There was also a recommendation that the ground surface level under the side gate (by the Hall kitchen) need re-instating to prevent a trip hazard, parts of the perimeter fencing in the same locality had rotted, and there were projecting nails present.

It was resolved that a working group would check out these low risk comments on 19<sup>th</sup> September, and the Clerk would continue to chase Tim McGhee (WSC) who to date had not replied to her email request on the loose fixings and bolts.

## **VILLAGE GREEN**

In 2017 it had been agreed that an annual contribution would be demanded from all those residents at Brookside and bordering the Green, with vehicle access to their properties via the track along the village green and riverbank.

The draft for the 2020 contribution had been circulated to all councillors in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk should send out the demands, with a reminder to residents that the licence did not extend to the parking of vehicles on the track save for the loading or unloading of goods, or on the grass directly outside the boundary of their property, other than in exceptional circumstances for short term parking.

It was proposed that the Council place an order with D Haird & Co for a 20 tonne delivery of planings for re-instatement of the tracks, so that a working party could be arranged before the onset of winter. As usual the planings would be delivered to the track by the entrance to the Wood Yard, and Cllr Douglas James would oversee this work with other village volunteers.

**Driving and Parking on the Village Green and Track** – it had been noted over the previous weekends that a number of vehicles had been parked up on the bank outside the Packhorse Inn and on the track by the riverbank. It was viewed that most likely the cars belonged to customers visiting the village pub/restaurant.

After some discussion it was resolved that the situation should be monitored and the Council should not overreact but keep a watching brief on the situation and councillors should approach anyone they see parking on these prohibited areas. If necessary polite notices could be affixed to the windscreens of the offending vehicles.

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

### **Applications approved**

**DC/20/1202/TCA Moulton Village Hall – to fell 1 Lime Tree** - application submitted by Parish Council. Work to be completed within 2 years.

It was resolved that competitive quotes be obtained for this work later in the year, and to include any other works recommended by Mr Colin Price (see Village Maintenance).

GB Landscapes had already submitted a quote of £450.00 for felling the lime tree on 6<sup>th</sup> July (to be reduced if combined with other tree works including the removal of self-set trees to expose the planted and staked trees, and clearing the outgrowing branches and sundry vegetation and dead trees in the fence line between the playing field and village green for a total cost of £750 plus VAT.)

### **Diseased Cherry Tree – Village Hall site – DC/20/0882/TCA – approved 9/7/2020**

Garry Brown of GB Landscapes would be felling this tree on 7<sup>th</sup> September, as well as crown lifting the lime trees along the boundary with Bridge Street and removing the limb on the sycamore tree in close proximity to the zip wire, and other overhanging vegetation at a total cost of £550 plus VAT, approved at the July meeting. Payment on submission of the invoice on satisfactory completion of the work was unanimously approved.

### **Application refused**

**PO Stores Lawn House The Street** – replace windows – refused as the agent did not supply all the necessary technical information required by the conservation officer. Subject to an appeal by the applicant.

### **Sunnica Solar Farm** – update following zoom meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Cllr John Derry reported that it seemed that some notice had been taken over public concerns. The panels were to be located further away from settlements and roads, and the height reduced to 2.5m from 3.5m with extensive screening. The containers holding the batteries will be raised off the ground in case of flooding, but these would be 3 metres high. It was suggested that there was to be some scaling back of the overall area, but there was confusion over the switch from acreage to hectares in the reports. The original size quoted was 2,600 acres and the new quote in hectares converts to 2,791 acres – an increase in the overall area. If possible local labour would be sourced for the construction of the solar farm but once finished there did not seem to be any direct benefit for local people. An ongoing fund would be set up to cover the cost of panel removal .

The business rate income from the panels could be as much as 2 million pounds per year which would be split pro rata between the District and County Councils and a similar amount for the battery storage element.

A statutory consultation will be held this autumn with a view to seeking planning permission in 2021.

### **Planning Consultations**

3 consultations on the reform of the planning system had been circulated, as well as a letter addressed to the Secretary of State for Housing & Local Government from the Action with Communities in rural England, highlighting the risks of reducing the supply of affordable homes in rural areas.

Changes to the current planning system (**NALC deadline for responses 17 September**)- seeking views on changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need, securing first homes through developer contributions, temporarily lifting the small sites threshold and extending the current ‘Permission in Principle’ to major development.

Planning for the future - the planning white paper (**NALC deadline for responses 15 October**)

This consultation seeks views on each part of a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England to streamline and modernise the planning process, improve outcomes on design and sustainability, reform developer contributions and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.

Transparency and competition: a call for evidence on data on land control (**NALC deadline for responses 16 October**) - seeks views on proposals to require additional data from the beneficiaries of certain types of interests in land—rights of pre-emption, options and estate contracts. It also seeks views on the design of the policy and additional evidence on the impacts of the policy.



Mr John Ford asked to address the meeting, and he advised that having considered the documentation in some detail it would appear that if the proposed reforms to the planning system were approved there was a considerable risk that rural areas such as Moulton would be in danger of future development. Cllr Drummond had confirmed that Councils such as Moulton should consider what action needed to be taken to protect them from inappropriate development. Under the new Local Plan a further allocation of 6,000 homes would be needed in the West Suffolk area.

Moulton had been awarded the status of a secondary village in the newly adopted Development Plan which meant that housing growth would not focus here, and development would be restricted to infill or extensions to existing properties. However, it was noted that under the 2019 SHELAA consultation 2 large sites had been identified for potential development – WS144 Land Adjacent to Lark Hill (Newmarket Road) and WS143 Land between the School and the Carrot Wash site. It had been pointed out that this consultation document was not an assessment of whether the sites will be allocated in the future West Suffolk Local Plan nor does inclusion in the SHELAA imply or grant planning permission and hold no weight in future decision making. It was unanimously resolved that there was the potential for worrying developments in the planning system which could have an adverse effect on Moulton in the long term, and a working group should be formed to monitor the situation. Cllrs John Derry was asked to lead a group comprising of Cllrs Tim James and David Clarke, and Mr John Ford.

#### **Proposed Holiday Park - Ashley**

A Moulton parishioner had drawn the Council's attention to a controversial scheme and a press article about the proposed development of a 50 lodge holiday park outside Ashley on the Dalham Road, and details had been circulated.

It was not usual policy to take a direct interest in applications outside the parish, and in this case outside the county, unless councillors were of the view that it may have implications for Moulton and the surrounding area. It was felt that the Sunnica proposals could impact on Moulton in the future, and councillors were of the view this development would also create issues for the surrounding villages.

After some discussion it was resolved that the Council should submit objections to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds of the negative impact in this proposed rural location, the style, size and character of the holiday park which would be viewed for miles around, and increased traffic movements in Ashley and the surrounding villages.

Cllr Tim James was nominated to draft a response with the Clerk and submit on the Council's behalf.

#### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

**Payment of Accounts** - the Council confirmed and authorised the payment of the accounts as per the list for the 2020/2021 financial year, previously circulated and attached to the minute book. In addition, the Clerk requested authorisation for the payment of accounts detailed for payment on 1<sup>st</sup> September, and payroll and administration charges due at the end of the month.

**Grant Aid** – the annual payment approved in January 2020 was due to the Newmarket Day Centre. The sum of £200 was confirmed for payment.

**Audit of Accounts** – the Clerk/RFO advised that the annual accounts had been approved and the required notices published on the Parish website.

**Internal Auditor** – the Council resolved to make the annual donation of £25 in tokens, in lieu of remuneration for his work as Internal Auditor for the Council, to be drawn from the Chairman's allowance

**Review of Expenditure to date**

A schedule detailing income and expenditure to date, against budget, had been circulated, and the Clerk had produced the bank reconciliation, which had been approved by the Chairman, confirming a balance of £ 89,726.57 at 31/7/2020.

**Review of Insurance cover and renewal of premium due on 1/10/2020**

The renewal of the Council's cover will take effect from 1st October, and the Clerk had forwarded the documents in advance of the meeting. She had explained that Community Action Suffolk had been responsible for placing the Council's insurance for many years. It was a specialist market and it had been demonstrated that CAS achieved a beneficial rate resulting in a reduction in premium over the years - partly due to the Council's track record. The quote for 2020/21 with like for like cover on a long term undertaking (second of 3 year term) was £708.62.

The insurance covered the usual Local Authority standard insurance for Public Liability, Fidelity, Employee Dishonesty, Libel & Slander - as per the Core Package B, with full details circulated by email in advance of the meeting. In addition, there would be All Risks cover on Council's property in a banding up to a maximum value of £100,000.00.

Currently the asset register for insurance cover to date was £96,502.32 including a figure for office contents of £2,500.00. Councillors were asked to review the asset register and confirm that they were happy with the recommendations proposed by CAS. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to accept the cover as detailed, and the Clerk was authorised to renew cover for a second year and effect payment of £708.62.

**Future Management of the Council**

Cllrs Ryan Bragg and Tim James had equipped the storage room at the Village Hall, with Screwfix shelving, a Viking Direct table, and a donated office chair and filing cabinet.

The Council authorised re-imburement of the Screwfix shelving to Cllr Bragg (£50), payment of the Viking invoice for the table (£69.99 ex VAT and insurance)

In addition, the Clerk had obtained the recommendation of The Business Machines Company for IT equipment and services which had been circulated.

It was resolved to purchase a new hard drive for the Clerk, and apply for a domain email account, as the current Gmail account was nearing capacity. It was agreed that Laura Yates would liaise with the Chairman and Cllr Ryan Bragg to take IT issues forward so that she could obtain what was required up to a cost of £300.00 to be retrospectively approved by the Council.

The Chairman advised that Laura Yates had been provided with a contract of employment as per the draft approved by the Council at the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January, and this had been signed and countersigned by the Chairman, one copy returned to Laura for her records. As previously agreed the PAYE would be managed by SALC and the required payroll details had been passed to their finance department.

It was resolved that the monthly payroll cheques for salary and PAYE as calculated by SALC and submitted to the Clerk at the end of each month, should be raised by the Clerk, as contractually payable, and passed to 2 authorised signatories each month.

The Chairman advised that Laura would be working under Lorraine's guidance for the current month prior to being appointed Officer of the Council on 1<sup>st</sup> October. A further 4 week probationary period would run until 1<sup>st</sup> November, when it was hoped that both the Clerk and Council would wish the arrangement to proceed on a permanent basis.

The Chairman reported that having discussed the matter with Mrs Stone he proposed, with the approval of the Council, to retain Lorraine in an advisory capacity, so that the newly appointed Clerk, and the Council would be able to benefit from her longstanding knowledge.

### **SALC**

The Council confirmed receipt of E-bulletins and consultation document which had been circulated.

The West Suffolk area forum will be taking place online on Tuesday 8 September.

### **Devolution White Paper**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is likely to be publishing its devolution white paper in the autumn. In advance of this NALC had emailed a policy consultation briefing and had asked for responses by 17<sup>th</sup> August. In view of the short time scale the Clerk had circulated the information together with a copy of Moulton's previous response on Devolution dated 22/8/2016. A response supporting the earlier view was submitted as follows:-

SALC has forwarded on your email dated 28th July.

Moulton Parish Council's view is that the level of service currently provided by the local authorities is well below that which is to be expected and that devolution would only add another layer of decision making and would result in more confusion as to who was meant to be providing which service, at an additional cost, and with increased bureaucracy, and a lack of accountability.

Any changes must not undermine the important role Parish Councils play in representing parishioner and rate payer views, and their communication with higher authorities.

### **URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS**

A letter from Anglian Water had been circulated concerning the installation of a new water pipeline. They were currently identifying the likely routes and the timescales for delivery. They were seeking to identify routes that minimise the impact to the local environment and disruption to the community.

The preliminary work will be taking place over the next few months, and we will be contacting landowners and farmers about the works. Further information could be obtained by contacting Anglian Water's Customer Centre, call us on 03457 145145 or email StrategicPipelines@anglianwater.co.uk using with reference 'Woodsp'

A request from the Communities Officer at West Suffolk to assist a vulnerable resident had been circulated. In particular the main problem was to cut down the overgrown garden. The resident could not access the garden other than a small area cleared by the washing line. There was a cat and dog at the premises and it was understood that the area was badly fouled.

It was proposed that if the vulnerable resident was in social housing, perhaps the responsibility lay with the local authority to maintain the overgrown garden. The Clerk was asked to make further enquiries and report back to councillors if further help were needed. It was suggested that if a working party were required to cut back the vegetation West Suffolk's green waste vehicle should be used to cart the vegetation away. Another suggestion was to employ the Young Offenders task force?

The Chairman reported that a resident had reported her concern at the condition of the trees along the riverbank along Footpath 4, behind Riverside Walk, to Andrew Reid, the Cabinet Member for Highways at the County Council. The Public Rights of Way team had been asked to investigate the condition of the trees, identify the landowner and advise them of the recommended works required.

A parishioner had contacted the Chairman to ask if the overhanging vegetation at The Street end of the footpath from The Street to Lark Hill could be cleared. Cllr Tim James had contacted the owner of the property who had agreed to deal with the matter.

#### **FORMAT FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Clerk had contacted the Head Teacher, Mrs Shipp, to find out if she was happy for the Parish Council to return to the School – subject to Government advice regarding the Holding of meetings. She had advised that she was happy for the Parish Council to use a classroom. And that it would be helpful if tables and backs of chairs etc could be wiped after use, so that it is clean for children the next morning. In addition the School cleaner would re-wipe in the morning as an additional precaution.

The Chairman asked members if they were comfortable to attend actual meetings, rather than calling zoom meetings in the current uncertain climate. Councillors were unanimous that they were happy to attend at the School, on the understanding that masks would not have to be worn.

It was resolved that the situation would be monitored and if safe to do so, the next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm at Moulton School for a duration of 90 minutes only – and would close at 8pm promptly.

The outgoing Clerk was asked if she would attend the next meeting as an observer.

Laura Yates would be asked to have a zoom back up in place in the eventuality that it was deemed unsafe to meet in public. Zoom could be purchased on a monthly basis and registered with MPC email address to ensure it is for use of the Parish Council only. The price per month is £11.99 ex Vat (£14.39 including Vat). There was no time limit on meetings and you can invite up to 100 participants.

The Chairman apologised for the last minute technical hitch with zoom, which had resulted in the re-issue of a new passcode and thanked all those for participating and closed the meeting at 8 pm.

**Signed**

**Date**