

**Minutes of the remote meeting of Moulton Parish Council held on
Monday 6th July 2020 at 6.00 pm by video conference link.**

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

APOLOGIES – None

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

ALSO PARTICIPATING - District Cllr Roger Dicker, the Clerk and the Chairperson of the Panthers Football Club

MINUTES – copies of minutes of the meeting held on 8/6/2020 had been circulated. The Chairman advised that the Clerk had added Annette Pickering’s name to the list of those responsible for the bus shelter. It was unanimously agreed that these could now be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

REVIEW OF FOOTBALL LICENCES 2020/21

The Chairman reported that following an ongoing email dialogue with representatives from the Panthers football club over the past 2 weeks, an informal chat with their Chairperson, Nicola Talbot, he had attended a meeting on Tuesday 30th June evening on the playing field with Lorraine, Nicola, and 3 of their coaches, when the PC's concerns at the breach of the PC's Covid 19 Lock Down of the football field effective from 23rd March had been fully aired.

It had been stressed that the managers/representatives of the teams were required to adhere to the terms and conditions of the licences and take responsibility for the management of the goal posts before, during and at the end of play. The Village had no paid employees and councillors and villagers gave up a lot of their time to ensure the facility is well maintained and managed. It had been agreed to draw a line over the past and look to the future.

The Panthers representatives had been asked to put forward their requirements for the future of organised football in the village. The coaches agreed to accept full responsibility during matches and training but wanted no further involvement or responsibility for the pitch and posts for community use. They were looking for flexibility in the coming year, due to the uncertainty during the ongoing Covid crisis, and no firm idea of when formal matches will resume. They were of the opinion that the Village Green surface was unsuitable for pre-season exercise and training, and football footwear should be worn at all times. Currently pre-season training was being carried out in Cheveley, and there were a minority of Moulton children represented in the teams.

Following this meeting, the Chairperson had emailed the Parish Council confirming the issues raised at the meeting.

The main points which the teams wanted the Council to consider were as follows:-

The possibility to bring forward training on the pitch from mid-August to mid-July, as the pitch had been rested since lock down with none of the end of season matches and training.

Unanimously resolved – the licences should not be renewed before mid August to permit the second fertilizer treatment and to help the further regeneration of the surface before studded footwear returned to the high usage areas when training recommences.

The potential to prolong the end of the season next May/June 2021 – dependent on the directives from the FA – currently it is not known when and if matches will take place and how long the season will run. **Unanimously agreed.**

Training - Tuesday 6-7pm (under 16's), Thursday 5.30-6.30 (under 9) Saturday morning (girls) after 9.30am, with flexibility as the time might be slightly different (give or take 30 minutes) due to coaches availability and the small group sessions that Covid rules require.

If matches were not going to be played for some time the Panthers would like the option for the teams to also train on the pitch at the weekends (either Saturday or Sunday) instead of mid-week over the winter months and summer. **Unanimously agreed**

Management of goal post – the Club would be responsible for their use during training sessions and matches; after use they will then be stored on the edge of the field, at the agreed location and securely locked. Inspection sheets will be filled out after each training session or match. These sheets will be for each team and kept in their kit bags and at intervals a copy to be sent to the Parish Council. As in previous year any health and safety issues will be reported to the Clerk.

The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with the company who had supplied the goal posts. They advised that the only anchorage required was two U pegs per goal, although a risk assessment of the soil conditions needed to be taken before use. A set of 4 pegs was £30.62 plus VAT and carriage of £12.10. It was unanimously agreed that a set should be ordered and affixed to the goal posts, which hopefully will mean that they are secure at all times and will not become loose and abandoned on the pitch to be caught up in the grass cutter.

It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk would now revise the licences for both the Panthers and the Veterans as per previous year, but with amendments to reflect the revisions agreed at the meeting. It was agreed that the licence fee and contribution towards maintenance should remain at the same level of £40 (licence) and £50 (maintenance) per team.

The Chairman suggested that some of the historical issues around football on the playing field could be resolved by dealing with local village use separately to use by the football clubs. Enquiries were being made to see how many local children had an interest in football activity and how this could be provided. In particular, who would represent and manage this local interest.

The Chairman thanked Nicola Talbot for joining the meeting to discuss the renewal of the licence.

COVID 19 CRISIS

The Chairman updated councillors and advised that the plans put in place by the Council, volunteers and representatives of the **Community Resilience Group** appeared to be holding up.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

COUNTY COUNCIL –

The June Newsletter for parishes had been circulated – this was still very much related to Covid 19 issues. There had been no response from Cllr Andy Drummond on the Council's

ongoing highway concerns. It was reported that the road markings at the junction of Brookside/Bridge Street had finally been repainted.

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Dicker advised that there was nothing of local interest to report - all related to Bury St Eds issues

The Parish Council had been contacted again regarding the on-going and long standing concerns over the empty property off Bridge Street which had been unattended since the owner had transferred into care. It was viewed that the abandoned house and garden were a health risk and had attracted vermin. The Public Health Officer had reported that the owner had recently died and the Estate was now in the hands of executors. It was hoped that there could now be a swift response to the concerns over the condition of the premises, and the neighbour had been updated.

VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

Diseased Cherry Tree – Village Hall site

Awaiting permission from the Planning Authority to fell.

The lime trees outside the village hall on Bridge Street - it was agreed that the specialist contractor whilst on site should remove the lower branches of the lime trees on the boundary of the village hall which were now causing an obstruction and blocking the line of sight when leaving the car park.

The Clerk, Vice Chairman and Cllr Douglas James met Garry Brown of GB Landscapes on site and he had subsequently submitted a quote of £550 plus VAT to fell the prunus tree, with the usable wood being taken to the Wood Yard in manageable pieces, the remainder being chipped and disposed, and the crown lifting of the Lime trees to approximately 2.5 metres. It was resolved that subject to permission to fell the prunus, the Council should proceed with the removal of this diseased tree, and at the same time improve visibility along Bridge Street. The Clerk was asked to accept this quote and ask for the work to be undertaken as soon as convenient, and the Clerk was authorised to discharge the invoice on satisfactory completion of the work.

The tree contractor was asked whilst on site to remove the limb from the sycamore in the tree belt adjacent to the Village Green which was in close proximity to the zip wire.

The Council considered future management of the trees in the vicinity of the playing field including the **Lime Tree – by the village hall**. It was viewed that this specimen was now too big for the site, will only increase as the species had capacity to reach a height of over 100 feet in height, and had become a potential hazard

Pollarding would only encourage re-growth and it was viewed that the better option would be to fell to ground level and use base of stump as a bird table rather than grinding out.

In view of the length of time taken to get approval the Clerk was asked to submit an application. On determination the Council, following consultation with the Village Hall Management Committee, could decide if they wished to proceed with the work later in the year, and following a professional recommendation and report from Mr Colin Price who had previously acted for the Council. It was unanimously agreed to ask for advice on **the self-set and staked trees along the playing field boundary with Jennings Barn, the trees and sundry vegetation along the belt between the playing field and village green, the partially cleared belt adjacent to the meadow, and the trees opposite the PO Stores and along Brookside.**

Packhorse Fencing had been asked to trim back the lower overhanging branches on the playing field, opposite the PO Stores.

PLAYING FIELD

Proposed shelters on the meadow side of the football field. Before further consideration could be given to these plans, a fully costed quotation had been requested as well as proposals for funding.

Picnic tables and seats

An order had now been placed with Realise Futures for one picnic table as agreed at the last meeting and approved for payment on satisfactory receipt of the goods. A plaque (£21.00 plus VAT) had also been commissioned recognising Moulton's appreciation of Mick Dillon and his team. The New PO Stores had also offered to purchase another similar table.

In addition a villager wished to donate a seat in memory of his recently departed Father - his parents were Moulton residents for some 50 years. A traditional style garden seat was being purchased and added to the order placed with Realise Futures

Councillors were asked to consider a suitable site for this donated seat.

In view of the number of seats which had been donated over recent years it was suggested that the Council should have the right to remove any wayside furniture which was deemed unsafe, if the original donor was not in a position to maintain in the long term

Whilst on site, delivering the wayside furniture, Realise Futures had been asked to repair their grit container (the hinge on the lid was broken) situated at the road junction of the B1085 and Bridge Street.

Outdoor Classes – Yoga classes were continuing on the village green, and Ben Blowes would be re-commencing his outdoor fitness classes this week – with due regard to the current Covid 19 social distancing regulations

Play equipment – Government guidelines permitted the re-opening of playgrounds on 4th July. The Clerk had been in touch with West Suffolk's Parks Manager for guidance and he had advised that it was not possible to restrict numbers entering the open play area and suggested removing every other swing from the bays to allow further distancing between them. This had been carried out by Cllrs Mark Price and Douglas James on Friday evening in advance of re-opening. Additional signage (template provided by West Suffolk) had also been installed advising that due care and attention was needed, not to use equipment if you had symptoms of Coronavirus and to be aware that children were using play equipment at their own risk.

PLANNING MATTERS

Applications

Greenacre Brookside – crown lift Sycamore and cut back limbs overhanging neighbours property.

1 Chippenham Road – tree works to cypress - cut back by up to 3 metres, Holly - to cut back to 2 metres, and 2 Hazels - reduce height by up to 5 metres.

Unanimously agreed to support the tree works detailed in these applications

Applications approved – felling of diseased sycamore tree at **The Old Rectory Brookside**

Sunnica Solar Farm – the proposal team had arranged a virtual meeting to brief Councils on the current situation and plans on Wednesday 15th July starting at 7pm. 2 representatives

from each interested parish had been invited and Cllrs John Derry and Tim James had agreed to represent Moulton

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Payment of Accounts - cheques were authorised as detailed on the 2020/21 schedule attached to the minute book.

Audit of Accounts – the Clerk advised that she had now received acknowledgement from the external auditors that the AGAR was now in the queue for processing. If there were no queries PKF Littlejohn would carry out the review and report their findings in due course.

SALC – a consultation on the new model member Code of Conduct had been launched – deadline 17th August. High standards of conduct and behaviour were of huge importance to the local (parish and town) council sector as they are needed to protect the integrity of decision making, maintain public confidence, and safeguard local democracy. NALC strongly encouraged local councils to consider the proposed new model member code of conduct and respond. It was also open to individual councillors to make representations. As NALC will be responding to the consultation and engaging further with the LGA, and it was hoped that SALC would be commenting on behalf on parish councils it was resolved that the Council would not make a separate submission.

Future Management of the Council – it was confirmed that the Recruitment Panel was planning to interview potential candidates following a short list drawn up from all the application submitted.

It was anticipated that the Panel would be in position to take a decision in early August. It was unanimously resolved that the Council should authorise the Recruitment Panel, and Cllr David Clarke (member of the Council’s Finance Working Group), to proceed and recruit the successful applicant following the interview process. The terms and conditions, and contract of employment would be drawn up in August, as detailed in the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June.

It had already been agreed that the Council’s storage room in the Village Hall would be equipped in August and approval has been given to purchase shelving, cabinets etc to a value of £500.00. In addition the Council authorised further spending up to £1,500 towards the upgrading facilities for the future management of the Council including IT equipment.

URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS - NONE

The next meeting of the Council was fixed for Monday 7th September at 6pm. Another zoom meeting would be held unless a suitable and safe venue was available by that time.

The future format of meetings would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Signed *David Almond*

Date *1st September 2020*