

Draft Minutes of the remote meeting of Moulton Parish Council held on Monday 8th June 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

APOLOGIES – Cllr Ed Chambers (excused due to a prior commitment) and Mr John Ford

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

ALSO PARTICIPATING - C Cllr Andy Drummond (left at 7pm) D Cllr Roger Dicker (joined at 7.15pm), & the Clerk.

MINUTES – copies of minutes of the meeting held on 4/5/2020 had been circulated. It was unanimously agreed that these could now be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

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. A second flier had been distributed to ensure that no one had been missed out who was in need of help. Currently there was little call on the nominated volunteers which demonstrated there was an excellent network of neighbourly responders.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

COUNTY COUNCIL – the May 2020 Parish Newsletter had been circulated covering updates on Highway issues, Adult Care, Recycling etc during the Covid crisis.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Drummond for being present at this virtual meeting.

Highway Matters

The reply to the Chairman's email to Cllr Drummond with all the outstanding issues and concerns, had been circulated and is attached to the minutes Pages 1319- 1322 - County Council's response highlighted in red.

The Chairman advised that councillors needed to decide which of the matters should be pursued and following an in depth discussion the Clerk was instructed to respond to Cllr Andy Drummond as detailed in blue. He was asked to continue to engage with the Highways Service Delivery Centre on Moulton's behalf.

Public Footpaths

No 6 - Griffiths Yard – the ongoing need to waymark the right of way had finally been resolved after 12 months. The Rights of Way officer had posted the discs to the Clerk, and Cllr Douglas James had, as previously agreed and recorded, fixed these small discs to either side of the metal gate crossing the footpath. However within 24 hours the discs had disappeared from the gate.

The Public Rights of Way officer advised the Clerk that there had been discussions with the landowner regarding the newly installed gates and boundary fence and that these were not authorised. It was viewed by the County Council that the owner was trying to disguise the public footpath. The Footpaths Officer advised that she would be writing formally to advise

that the route should be waymarked or further action would be taken for the removal of the gates.

Another set of waymark signs had been installed on a post next to the wrought iron gate, erected on the adjoining landowner's property.

No 15 – Dalham Road to Ashley – it had been reported that the recently added footpath to the network was currently blocked by Stud fencing. The cul de sac route was meant to run from the Dalham Road up along an arable field and then across stud land to Ashley. Currently only the track along the first field to the tree/shrub belt was passable. The access was then blocked by fencing. The County Council Rights of Way Officer had advised they had not had an opportunity, before lockdown, to meet with the landowner to discuss the fencing obstruction, or a potential diversion. Once restrictions were eased, and it was safe to have a social distance site meeting, this would be arranged.

Bridleway 14 – it had been reported to the Chairman that there was some barbed wire in the undergrowth causing a potential risk to dogs and children. This formed part of an old boundary fence on the opposite side of the riverbank on the bridleway to Dalham. Traditionally villagers would leave the footpath here to access the river and the rope swing. The Council was asked if a more suitable boundary could be erected as the wire was no longer fixed to the posts. It was reported that most of the barbed wire had now been removed. It was agreed that if the villager wanted to pursue this, she should contact the landowner. This matter was outside the jurisdiction of the Council.

Footpaths 5 & 10 – the County Council's Public Rights of Way officer had been in touch with the farmer who had erected electric fencing along these footpaths and advised that they were not causing an obstruction, and the County Council had no objection to the installations. It was also confirmed that the public only have the right to access along the public rights of way. A person who enters or remains on land without lawful authority commits trespass against the holder of the land, and anyone who strays from a right of way or uses it other than for passing or repassing commits trespass.

The villager who had raised initial concerns had approached Cllrs Jane Horsnell and Douglas James raising further concerns over the electric fencing and had also sent another email to the Clerk, which had been circulated.

It was unanimously agreed that the issues had been fully covered and no further action was deemed necessary.

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Dicker had emailed confirming that open street markets were now operating following the lifting of lockdown. Brown bin collections had restarted as well as the opening of recycling centres (cars only and with a prior reservation made on-line). The Planning Committee had approved an application for a Costa and McDonalds in Newmarket opposite the Tesco stores, and the Authority had been successful in addressing single persons Council Tax fraud saving around £250,000. The Planners were working on the first stages of the new Local Plan.

Cllr Dicker joined the meeting at 7.15 and was thanked for participating.

VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

The Clerk advised that she had now asked Ken Hutchinson to carry out his spring cut of the riverbank following the end of the bird nesting season. It was resolved that on completion

of the work, and submission of the invoice, the Clerk was authorised to discharge the account.

Tree works – trimming of overhanging branches on playing field, opposite the PO Stores. It had been noted that some of the branches were obstructing passage on the playing field by the perimeter fence, and it was resolved that Packhorse Fencing be asked to trim back some of the lowest branches here.

Cherry Tree – located on western boundary of the village hall site and adjacent to Bridge Street and the wall of No 6. The Clerk had now submitted an application - **DC/20/0882/TCA** to have this diseased tree felled. The tree is of significant height and the diseased trunk could make it unstable. The canopy is large and covered with ivy – this weight increases the risk.

Subject to permission to remove the tree the Clerk would obtain a quotation from Garry Brown (the contractor known to the Council and previous employed by Mark Morton to carry out work in the parish). Due to the size of the tree a cherry picker would be needed to carry out the work.

The lime trees outside the village hall on Bridge Street - whilst on site, it was recommended that the specialist contractor 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.

PLAYING FIELD

The spraying and fertilizing of the football pitch had been completed. Cllr Douglas James reported that should weather conditions prevail he may be able to acquire the machinery to slit cut the surface.

A drawing for the **proposed shelters** on the meadow side of the football field had been circulated. It had previously been agreed that any structures must not impact on the visual amenity value in the centre of the village and must be of benefit to all who use the playing field, not just a facility for the footballers over a limited period in the winter months. Cllr Price had been asked to submit a detailed specification of the scheme for further consideration. It was viewed that these plans were an improvement on the original proposal for a block construction, and should not compromise the visual amenity, although reservations were made regarding future upkeep and maintenance, the long term liability and costs. Before further consideration could be given, a fully costed quotation would be needed, and proposals for funding.

In addition, Cllr Douglas James had sourced a catalogue detailing shelters and costs which he would pass to the Vice Chairman.

The **picnic tables and benches** on the playing field near the shop were showing signs of damage and wear. They had been well used over the past couple of months. Those outside the PO Stores had been removed during the current restrictions.

Cllr Douglas James had carried out repairs and maintenance with some wood donated by Bill Rampling, and this had made them serviceable in the short term. However, it was suggested that the PC consider the purchase of one additional picnic table. The Chairman had approached the new owner of the PO Stores who had indicated that he would be happy to purchase another.

It was suggested that the Council used the local Ipswich firm who had previously supplied furniture manufactured from recycled products, and councillors had considered their products on the website and it was proposed, and unanimously agreed to the purchase of the picnic table Code WFD13 at a cost of £371.15. The Chairman was to ask the owner of the Post Office if he was happy to donate an additional picnic table and approve a plaque recognising Moulton's appreciation of Mick Dillon and his team.

Outdoor Classes - the Parish Council had been approached by a yoga teacher who had previously hired the village hall, with a request to use the playing field or village green for classes from 5pm to 7.15pm on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Following the easing of lockdown restrictions, outdoor groups of up to 6 people were now allowed to meet, so long as social distancing was followed.

Permission had been granted to hold a trial run on the village green, prior to the Council considering this request.

The Council had previously granted permission for a licence for outdoor exercise classes at a fee of £25 per quarter, per venue. Exclusive use could not be granted, as both sites were public open spaces. The Council would need to know in advance the dates and times of the proposed classes, and under the present Covid regulations no more than 5 people plus the trainer were permitted. She would be responsible in ensuring that all participants adhered to the guidelines. No hand washing or other facilities were available.

It was resolved to offer a licence for a 3 month period at a cost of £25.00 – for classes to be held – preferably on the village green, but alternatively on the bottom end of the playing field near the zip wire, on areas where there was good grass cover to prevent undue wear.

It was agreed that Ben Bowes would also be given consent to run his fitness classes when he wished to make use of the parish facilities subject to the usual licence – dates and times to be agreed on application.

PLANNING MATTERS

Applications - Diseased Cherry Tree – Village Hall site adjacent to Bridge Street and the boundary wall of No 6 - DC/20/0882/TCA

Expiration date 14/7/20 – if the Council had not received a notification by this date the work could be carried out in accordance with the application.

If permission were granted a substitute tree would be planted in the belt between the playing field and meadow, rather than a replant on the small patch of grass outside the Hall. Colin Price was to be consulted about a replanting scheme for the recently cleared area on the other side of the playing field.

Applications approved - DC/20/0537/TCA - to fell one poplar tree at French Hall 28 The Street

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Payment of Accounts - cheques were authorised as detailed on the 2020/21 schedule 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 year end 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 had been sent off to the external auditors and the period for the exercise of public rights had been published and would run from 15/6/20 to 24/7/20. 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.

Section 137 Grants 2020/2021

The following grants approved at the January meeting were confirmed:-

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.

REPRESENTATIVES ON VILLAGE CHARITIES/BODIES

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

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

The Chairman had suggested that individual councillors may like to consider taking on specific parish interests, although these duties were not prescriptive and did not prevent other councillors from getting involved. He thanked councillors for volunteering and the detailed summary of additional councillor/parishioner roles was agreed as follows:-

Speed Watch	T James & D Clarke
Parish Archivist	Mr J Gunson
Moulton School	R Bragg
Bus Shelter	M Price & T James
Red BT Box	E Chambers & Mrs Bev Culloden
Waste Management & Litter	J Derry
Dog Bins and Fouling	J Horsnell & T James
Rights of Way & Public Footpaths	J Horsnell & T James
Highways	M Price, J Derry, R Bragg, Mr J Ford
B1085 Safe Pedestrian/Cycle Route	D Clarke, J Derry, Mrs F Unwin & Mrs L Stone
Railway Issues	Mr J Ford
SALC/NALC	New Clerk
Communications & Website	Mrs E Rampling & New Clerk
Planning	J Derry & T James
St Peter's Church	Mr Bob Saltmarsh & Mrs Anne Garmston

Future Management of the Council

An email had been circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting advising that the Chairman and Clerk had considered when the Council might be able to restart the recruitment process following the lifting of some of the Covid restrictions.

The Clerk had undertaken a risk assessment and suggested that it would be safe to carry out interviews during the last week in July. From 24th July the Parish Council would have exclusive use of the Village Hall. Social distancing could be observed and the interviews could take place in the Hall or outside (weather permitting) on the grass by the football entrance.

It was confirmed that the Panel would comprise of The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Jane Horsnell. The Clerk would also be present.

It was suggested that interviews should take place over 2 days, to ensure that there were a maximum of 5 people present at any one time, and the candidates would be reassured that the numbers present were within current guidelines. The door handles, surfaces etc could be sanitised between interviews.

The Panel could make a recommendation to the Council in early August, proposing the terms and conditions to be offered to the successful candidate with a starting date of 1st September. This would give sufficient time to liaise with SALC etc on PAYE etc. in August.

As well as dealing with employment issues, the Village Hall storage facility could be equipped and set up, and the purchase of a laptop and office equipment for the new recruit.

Under the terms of the draft contract a probationary period of 8 weeks had been agreed. It was suggested that the Clerk would work with the chosen applicant for the month of September and if the transition period had gone according to plan, Mrs Stone would retire at the end of September, but would be on call to give help for as long as necessary, and in particular until the probationary period had expired.

The Clerk was asked to contact all those on the short list agreed by the Chairman and recruitment panel following circulation of all the emailed applications, advising them how the Council was hoping to proceed, subject to any contingency plans which may have to be taken if the infection rate rose causing a change to the current Covid regulations.

It was suggested that the candidates on the short list should be asked if they had sufficient on-line connectivity to accommodate internet conference calls, training courses etc, should the current crisis prove this to be necessary in the coming months.

URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS - NONE

Next virtual meeting of the Council was fixed for Monday 6th July at 6pm. Details of the Zoom link would be forwarded nearer the time.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Signed

Date

CC Highways Authority response 26th May 2020 (in red type) to the long standing issues in MOULTON. Parish Council response in blue – 8/6/2020.

School Road - surface water

A ditch which lies between the road and a hedge on the west side near the school requires maintenance to provide freeboard for water to drain off the road. Fran Clarke agreed at our meeting with Mary Evans and the Highways team on 7th Oct to confirm who owned the ditch and therefore who is responsible for its maintenance. We have not heard from Fran.

We have already provided two updates on this – one via customer services and the other via Luke Merton a couple of weeks ago. We confirmed that the ditch is the responsibility of Suffolk Highways to maintain. However, there will be no works ordered to clear the ditch at this time because it does not fall under our intervention criteria. The road does not suffer from serious flooding and Francesca (Engineer) has been on site with Robin Millar during a very wet day and can attest to there being no flooding just surface water. I did however order the gullies and kerb offlets to be cleaned and jetted to outfall. Flowline completed this work in April 2019 and reported no problems with jetting to the outfall which goes into the ditch. A cyclic cleanse was also done along the road outside the school in January 2020 and all gullies were attended to with no reported blockages.

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 gulley cleanse was carried out in Jan 2020. Parish Council working party cleared all the gullies on School Road on 19th October 2019, and volunteers regularly remove blockages from the drains along School Road when passing by on foot.

Report 252978 (25.4.17) Chippenham Road (close to no. 24) – surface water and property flooding “Anaconda” drain

As far as we are aware a contractor’s jetting tool remains in this drain. Once this is removed further investigations are required to check for collapsed drains in the area

A drainage matrix / report has been undertaken for this location and findings have been sent to the relevant Suffolk Highways team. Based on the information they’ve received, it is unlikely that planned work will take place here in the foreseeable future. The reason being that after the extremely wet autumn/winter we’ve just experienced we have more significantly more problem sites to address. We prioritise our drainage work firstly by flooding inside people’s homes, then where there is an immediate risk to life or health. That includes standing water in dangerous locations on high speed roads, or from foul sewers being inundated. The jet and hose that is currently stuck within the pipework will need to be dug out, meaning its removal would ideally need to coincide with future maintenance.

Noted – the PC to check with the adjoining landowners to see if they had been able to dig out the ditch by the Carrot Wash building to achieve the necessary flow and drainage which would prevent the layby outside No 24.

Report 236831 (19.3.2019) Pedestrian crossing marking and trip hazards at the school. We have been informed that funds are now available to do this work. Can Highways provide timescales for this?

We recently undertook a survey of the roads outside Moulton Primary and there is not a zebra crossing to refresh. There may, at one point, have been an 'unofficial' crossing point (as indicated in the attached image) however 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.

While we will be carrying out signing and lining improvements at this site in the future (I'm unable to advise when at the moment, however it'll likely be sometime this year). Thank you – look forward to this being completed. trip hazards will not be included – noted and perhaps this will be kept under review on inspection visits to Moulton. These need to be reported via our online tool and will be dealt with as necessary. However, one of our wardens inspected the reports in March 2019 and no trip hazards were identified. We have received no subsequent reports of trips at this location.

Report 265808, 272860, 276861 (13.1.20 & 28.2.20) Newmarket road – outside 4 & 5 Flint Cottages Blocked drains. Also no response to Clerk's email to Luke Merton of 24th April 2020

An email was received from Lorraine (Parish Clerk) regarding blocked drains on 24 April, however this was not replied to as we have explained several times now that officers such as Luke should not be contacted directly about outstanding reports, these need to be reported to Customer Services via phone or email. We have had contact from the resident whose driveway and garage is suffering from flooding. The resident has been visited and contacted by one of our Highway Assessment Officers plus has received updates from the drainage team. We can confirm that a drainage scheme is in place to alleviate the flooding and works will take place this financial year 2020/21. The scheme is currently planned for works to take place late August/September 2020. Thank you. However in the current situation there may be a change in those dates if resource is affected or further lockdown measures are introduced or increased.

Footpath No 6 waymarking On-going for 18 months. No response to clerk's email to Claire Dickinson of 5th March 2020, cc Luke Merton. Our Rights of Way Manager is sending way mark discs to Lorraine this week. This should be resolved now. Case closed thank you.

Road markings A number of worn road markings have been recently reported on the reporting tool. Markings laid out in the village during the last 2-3 years have faded very quickly. Do materials and work procedures meet technical specifications?

All customer reports of faded lining will be inspected against our published intervention criteria. However, we have passed your comments regarding faded lining during the last 2-3 years to our lining works manager for consideration. Thank you.

White lines at junction of Brookside/Bridge Street (Ref 269255) and warning inverted triangles still not repainted – due within 14 weeks from 6/3/20.

Signage in the area is generally is poorly maintained. Reports 269258, 269504 (3.2.2020) School Road crossroads near boys grave. Not replacing the damaged sign at the crossroads increases the risk of road traffic accidents at this site.

Our speed and safety team has provided updates to these reports: Suffolk Highways is aware of these sign locations and the signs have been added to the countywide signs list to be prioritised against all other signing requirements in the county. We have to prioritise locations based on available budget. We currently prioritise signs in the following order: 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?

- Warning signs
- Signs associated with Traffic Regulation Orders
- Directional Signs
- Information Signs

For your information we have over 500 signing issues listed which continues to grow.

Work efficiencies Many Parishioners comment on the apparent 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

Wherever possible we do try and reduce the number of visits to a parish but this is not always achievable. We order reactive works in two ways; through our statutory road inspections and as a result of a customer report. Depending on the category of road and severity of the defect our repair times range from 2 days to 8 weeks. We’re sure you can appreciate that we have a lot of repairs to do each day and if we have 20 repairs that all need to be done within 2 days then they take priority over orders that have a longer completion date. Therefore it is not always possible to repair a defect that has an 8 week timeframe on the same day as a defect that has a 2 day timeframe. The same is true for our linings works. For example a faded ‘Stop’ line on a strategic ‘A’ road would be ordered to be renewed within 5 working days whereas faded yellow lines on the same road which would be placed on a 14 week renewal order. Again meaning that it might not be possible to complete all lining works in the village on the same day.

Communication Reporting tool. We appreciate all issues must be logged on the reporting tool. It is however difficult for the Parish Council and Parishioners to follow responses from Highways and track the status of individual issues on the tool. Can we pull regular reports off the system? Do we need training to make more use of the tool?

We are looking at ways of being able to generate reports from the reporting tool, related to areas of the county – this is something we could provide to you / the county councillor on a regular basis. Please continue to provide your email address when reporting issues on the reporting tool, this allows us to keep you updated. 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 of more than 10 mb 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 PC and County Councillor.

Points of contact Emails to the Highways team with specific enquiries which cannot be dealt with on the reporting tool often remain unanswered. Can our clerk expect to have a point of reference in Highways outside the reporting tool or do we have to address all our enquiries to yourself as our County Council representative?

Please continue to use the reporting tool and customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk to log enquiries with the service. Everything logged via customer services will be responded to. If you would like to escalate any issue you feel need it, please can you do this through your county councillor – Cllr Andy Drummond.

Will do.

B1085 speed restrictions and footpath Moulton PC remain committed to improving safety along the B1085 to Kentford. We will pick this up again once we’ve made progress in resolving the above. A detailed response was sent to the PC from David Chenery and Suffolk County Council’s Transport Strategy team.

The Parish Council will be following this up in a separate communication. Please refer to villager’s email to Cllr Drummond. Villagers are urgently requesting the speed limit reduction along the whole length of the B1085 between the villages (over 500 parishioners signed petition). The need has been highlighted during lock down – there has been an increased number of pedestrians, cyclists and horseback riders - it is highly dangerous in view of the speed of passing traffic. The long term aim is to have a safe walk/cycle route but before this can be achieved the speed limit must be implemented along the full length between the 2 communities.