

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of Westleton Parish Council at the meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 24 August 2020 in Westleton Village Hall.

Ian Haines

Clerk of the Council

There were Present

Cllr Paul Holmes (Chairman), Cllr Ian Johnson (Vice Chairman), Cllr Julian Alexander, Cllr B Banks, Cllr Antony Clough, Cllr C Fisher, Cllr Amanda Freeman, Cllr Chris Freeman, Cllr A Paige, Cllr Nick Shearme,

In Attendance

Cllr Richard Smith (SCC for minutes 20/69 – 20/76 only)

Cllr Norman Brooks (ESC for minute 20/72 only) Ian Haines (Clerk)

PRE AGENDA MATTERS

Contributions from members of the public.

There were no members of the public present.

AGENDA

20/69 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence:

A welcome was extended to Cllr B Banks as newly co-opted Member.

Apologies: Cllr Andrew Turner

20/70 Declaration of interests

Council members to declare possible interests they may have in any items on the agenda, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary and to consider requests of dispensation.

None this time.

20/71 Pre Agenda Report from SCC Councillor

Following his detailed report to the last meeting, Cllr Smith provided a brief update this time.

20/72 Pre Meeting Report from ESC Councillor

Cllr Brooks gave a summary of the work being carried out under his Transport portfolio role on the Cabinet – in particular the new arrangements and responsibilities in place covering car parking and parking enforcement. It was also noted that several of the local leisure centres had [or were in the process of] being refurbished and in turn were reopening for business. The District Council were also administering various funds and grants to help local business through the Covid situation.

20/73 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 20^h July 2020

It was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2020 be accepted as a true record.

20/74 Matters Arising from the Minutes 20th July 2020

Further to minute 20/57, it was confirmed that the Clerk had written to both the County

Council and District Council. Response/s awaited. The Chairman and Vice Chairman were also hoping to meet direct with the landowner on site.

In relation to minute 20/58, it was noted that the dead bough had been removed.

The Clerk also reported [further to minute 20/67] that Cllr Turner had prepared a draft submission on Sizewell C to go to the Planning Inspectorate and that this would now be emailed round to Members for comment.

20/75 Council Finances and Accounts

- (a) **Business Debit Card** – the Clerk advised that Barclays had at last issued this to the Parish Council and the first payment/transaction on it had been made (see below).
- (b) **Income** – Income to date were acknowledged and approved. The Clerk reported that the outstanding VAT back payment due from HMRC had finally come through.
- (c) **Expenditure** - Expenditures to date were acknowledged and approved.
- (d) **Invoices and Payments** – The following invoices were **agreed** for payment:-

From	Item	Amount
Roy Swindell	Payment made for Community Field grass cut	£60.00
Ian Haines	Clerks expenses (£54.72) & salary (£414.00)	£468.72
Premier Toilet Hire	Playing Field (10/7-31/7)	£86.40*

* Paid by Business Debit Card

20/76 Community Field

Cllr C Freeman thanked everyone who had provided additional help recently with various on-site works (hedge cutting, strimming & general tidy up of areas). The Working Party will meet again on Thursday, 27 August at 5pm and anyone able to lend further support would be greatly appreciated.

Planting – the young trees had suffered in the recent dry spell and 4 limes will need replacing. Cllr N Shearme will obtain quotes for these. Discussion took place on better ways to undertake watering and manage the summer drought conditions and it was **agreed** that the installation of an irrigation system/water pipe should be looked at by digging out a narrow trench in the vicinity of the trees. Cllr C Freeman to cost. It was also felt that whenever future planting is undertaken the roots needed to be treated beforehand to better encourage growth.

Boules Court – Roy Swindell had asked if an additional bag of grit could be purchased for the surface. This will then need to be ‘bedded in’ using the Wacker. Action: Cllr C Freeman.

Other works recently completed or identified included (1) new gate post installed (2) second goal post put back in position (3) cricket nets on order (4) new basketball post to be purchased/fitted. (5) chippings around the play equipment require loosening.

With reference to the rabbit damage (reported to the last meeting), Cllr C Freeman reported that he had received a quote of £50 to deal with the problem and this was **agreed**/authorized.

There was some discussion covering the availability of future funds to replace major worn out items of play equipment plus machinery used for onsite maintenance and the Clerk confirmed that a ring fence sum for the Community Field is included as part of the annual budget preparations.

20/77 Common

Cllr N Shearme reported that he had undertaken a recent site walkabout and just like the Community Field many of the trees appeared to be struggling due to lack of water.

The meeting was pleased to note that the fly tip on the Black Slough track had now been cleared away and no further incidents reported there.

The main track leading up from the Reckford Road layby had become overgrown [making it currently virtually impassable for emergency service vehicles) and it was **agreed** that Cllr Shearme obtain an outside quote for undertaking this clearance work.

There was still uncertainty with the Covid situation as to whether the Community Payback Team will be able to undertake any onsite work for the foreseeable future. Given this, it was **agreed** that a bid to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB should be put together to see if it may be possible to get volunteers out to undertake a set programme of work. Clerk to liaise with David Rouse prior to applying to the Countryside Projects Officer.

Noted that the next meeting of the Common Advisory Group is scheduled for 19/9/20.

20/78 Planning applications

It was noted that in the intervening period since the last Parish Council meeting there had been no new applications for consideration. However, the Chairman reported that he had received an email from Mike North (one of the owners of the Cherry Lee site included in the emerging Local Plan) seeking a meeting to discuss proposals which have been drawn up for the site development. At this stage no formal planning application has been submitted and these are just outline details. It was **agreed** that Cllrs Holmes, Johnson & Turner should represent the Parish Council.

20/79 Tree Warden Report

An inquiry had been received from a resident about a cherry tree in Grange View which was overhanging his property and blocking out light. Cllr A Clough had subsequently held a recent meeting on site with Peter Ross (Norse Countryside Manager) to discuss. In the circumstances, it was **agreed** that the Clerk should now ask Peter Ross to write to Mr Finch in this matter as the Parish Council have no authority to grant permission for work on the tree.

Cllr J Alexander also raised concerns about several locations in the village centre where hedges/vegetation growth from private gardens was overhanging onto footpaths. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should take up and send appropriate letters requesting that a cutback be undertaken to make it safer for pedestrians.

20/80 Local Housing Scheme

Cllr C Fisher provided an update. There had unfortunately been only a limited amount of progress in the last few months due to the lockdown but an attempt will now be made to move forward by setting up another meeting involving all parties - given that the March

meeting had to be cancelled. This will also cover discussions with the landowner concerning the *potential* sale to the Parish Council of an additional half acre of land to be used for allotment provision by the wider community.

20/81 Bottle Bank Site

The Parish Council had previously taken a decision to establish a permanent bottle bank site by looking to utilise redundant out-buildings linked to the White Horse ph. However, there were now concerns over the potential costs involved with the required conversion works. As well as this there are noise issues and a number of complaints have already been received from local residents about disturbances from the nearby temporary site by the pond.

After further careful consideration, it was **agreed** that the best location now appeared to be the Reckford Road layby just to the south of the village off the main B1125 as this is seen as being sufficiently set away from residential properties. Note: Originally this site was ruled out as perhaps being too remote but given the concerns above it was now seen to provide the best option available. The site also has the advantage in that the Parish Council own the adjacent land (i.e. The Common) which directly adjoins the layby and so it is proposed to excavate into a small piece of the soil bank which runs between the 2 litter bins in order to create a level concrete base to position the bottle bank. Before proceeding however the Clerk will write to Norse to establish that they are happy with the access for collection purposes. At the same time, enquiries will be made to establish whether it might be possible to take delivery of more modern design bins which had the ability to 'cushion' noise.

20/82 Village Environmental Concerns

It was **agreed** that the Clerk should write to the Crown Hotel with regard to a number of issues – principal concern being that guests staying there were apparently allowing their dogs to defecate in and around the war memorial as well as within the church grounds. A number of suggestions were put forward for dealing with the problem – including whether the Crown could designate a dedicated dog walking area to the rear of their premises.

Parking issues also continue to be at the fore. The Crown would be approached to explore whether there was scope to open up the back meadow as an overflow summer car park for people staying.

The Parish Council will also look again at the next meeting as to what additional measures might be taken to address vehicle speeding.

20/83 Website Update

The Clerk advised that new Accessibility Regulations were due to take effect from September and the Webmaster (John Bebbington) had undertaken an update as necessary to ensure that the site was compliant. The Parish Council recorded their appreciation and thanks to John for carrying out this work.

20/84 Highways Update

The Clerk had, that day, circulated an email from Mark Nichols at County Highways which provided a status update on various sites following the visit/inspections carried out earlier in the year.

Members recorded their disappointment that a number of concerns still did not appear to have been properly addressed namely (a) the requirement to undertake roadside repairs opposite Rolletts Farm (b) the conifer hedge on the boundary with The Grange and (c) overgrown gorse bushes along the Dunwich Road. With regard to the latter, it was suggested that the Clerk try approaching the RSPB direct in order to highlight.

20/85 New Year fireworks

Further to minute 20/66, it was **agreed** that Cllr N Shearme should make further enquiries with the supplier about likely costs – this with a view to then making a provisional order for the fireworks in order to secure early discount. The Parish Council were still hopeful that the event itself could go ahead on the basis of applying current social distancing rules for the actual outdoor display/bonfire – but it was recognised the usual post gathering and other activities probably would not be possible this time.

20/86 Correspondence

Councillors were advised of the following:

- (a) An email from a local resident had been received offering the availability/prospect of a number of oak trees being supplied free of charge – this as part of a climate change initiative. It was **agreed** that Cllr I Johnson would respond to Mr Bennell on the basis that we would like to take this up.

20/87 – Date of Next Meeting

Monday 28 September 2020 at 7.30pm at Westleton Village Hall.