

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF POTTER HEIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7.30pm**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021 IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Attendance:** Cllr Chapman, Cllr Graves-Morris, Cllr Lovick, Cllr May, Cllr Turner (Chairman), Cllr Richard Price, Cllr Harry Blathwayt, Sarah Vergette (Clerk) and eight members of the public.

Cllr Turner welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting will be recorded for the purpose of the minutes.

**1. To Receive Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr Rice and Cllr Standen.

**2. Declarations of Interest.**

There were none.

**3. Appointment of Clerk to the Parish Council.**

Sarah Vergette left the room whilst this was discussed.

Cllr Turner sent out the Contract and job description to all councillors for review, no-one had any comments or changes. It was **agreed** to engage the services of Sarah Vergette as Parish Clerk. The Employment Contract was duly signed.

The report from Cllr Price was brought forward. Cllr Richard Price reported that the total number of Covid cases in North Norfolk were now 4962, an increase of 180 in the last week and 394 since 1<sup>st</sup> September. The infection rate is 167 per 100,000, the previous week it had been 207 per 100,000. Sadly, deaths in North Norfolk now total 223 an increase of 2 in the last week. 90% of residents have received their first jab and 84% have had both jabs.

Cllr Price reported that Norfolk County Council are implementing a Community Road Safety Program, this had been agreed the previous week and the fund amounts to £1,000,000. North Norfolk, Broadland and Great Yarmouth Councils would receive their shares in year two and the maximum spend per project will be £10,000. Cllr Price also has his personal allowance which can be used for highway projects or in conjunction with the Parish Partnership Scheme. There is also a £10,000,000 to fund pothole repairs over four years.

Cllr Price stated that anyone can report potholes. Norfolk County Council are looking into using What Three Words to make finding the locations easier for the engineers. Highways are aware of problems with vegetation concealing signs.

Cllr Lovick asked Cllr Price if he was supportive of SAM2 signs as some people are sceptical about them. Cllr Price replied that there is evidence to show that the signs reduce speeding, the data counts the time and speed of vehicles and can be sent to the Road Safety Team. Cllr Price had recently discussed this issue with the new Police and Crime Commissioner. Cllr Price had also been discussing the use of ANPR to identify speeding vehicles. A member of public asked if the SAM2 should always be placed on road traffic signs, Cllr Price replied this is not correct, they can be placed on any suitable pole.

Cllr May asked when something would be done about the Bridge as there are trees growing out of it. Cllr Price will look into this. Cllr Price left the meeting. **Action Cllr Price**

**4. Co-Option of Councillors**

Four applications were received for three vacant positions, the applicants attending the meeting left the room at this point. There was a majority vote in favour of George Chasemore, Mary Haslam and Donald Pickering. Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed by the new Councillors who then took their places on the Parish Council. Claire Peat had recently resigned as a councillor, this had been reported to North Norfolk District Council and the

appropriate notices have been displayed. A new Councillor could be co-opted at the November meeting once the vacancy has been advertised.

**5. Resolution to exclude public for discussion of HR matter and Audit item 7**

Cllr Chapman stated that the person concerned specifically said that they would like this matter discussed in public. Cllr Graves-Morris stated that this was an exceptional item and therefore this HR matter could have a resolution to follow the wish of the nominee who was deemed to be an employee and discuss it in the public domain.

Cllr Turner explained that there is one item relating to HR matters and one specific item in the Audit that concerns an HR issue these need to be discussed in private. Cllr Graves Morris proposed that the HR matter relating to Item 7 of the Audit would be discussed in public, and the other HR matter would be discussed in private, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman, there were 7 seven votes in favour and one abstention.

**6. Approval of Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and Extraordinary Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021**

The minutes of the meeting 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were **approved**. The minute of 1<sup>st</sup> September were **approved**.

**7. Progress Reports on matters arising from the minutes.**

a. Dog/salt bins. Nothing to report.

b. Internal Audit Summary (to exclude Item 7). Cllr Chapman asked for his name to be removed from the Sub-committee and the report which had been put forward. Cllr Lovick made a statement which is appended to these minutes.

Cllr Lovick proposed that the payment should be accepted, and no further action or investigation takes place. He also proposed that a letter should be sent to Clerk a stating the matter is accepted and the Parish Council considers the matter closed.

Cllr Turner stated that the Council is audited every year and no issues had been brought up, she thought the report was unnecessary and could not support it. Everything had been approved by the Council.

Cllr Graves-Morris stated that there was a document which is a Memorandum that together with explicit performance constitutes a contract in common law. The Clerk did way over and above his requirements.

Cllr May suggested that a letter of apology should be sent to David Balls, Cllr Turner will do this.

Cllr Graves-Morris proposed that to accept the payment and conclude the matter, this was seconded by Cllr Lovick. There were four votes in favour and three abstentions.

Cllr Haslam stated that the three new councillors had no knowledge of the audit report, they would abstain from a vote. It was **agreed** to formally accept the audit, this was proposed by Cllr Lovick and seconded by Cllr Chapman.

c. Allotments. Mr Balls has sent out the invoice to the allotment tenants. It was agreed that there was no problem with the volume of water used.

Cllr May had a question under item 7d from the previous minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> May when consideration was given to whether the Council should take over responsibility for the play area. The Charity Commission would need to be contacted. This will be placed on the October agenda.

**8. Election of Officers and Committee Members**

- Drainage – Cllr May, Cllr Rice will be asked to assist with this
- Footpaths – Cllr Lovick

- Allotments Committee – Cllr Pickering
  - Environment Officer – Cllr Lovick, this including keeping the bus shelter clean
  - Ludham School Representative – Cllr Chasemore
  - Staithe Committee – Cllr Chapman and Cllr May
  - Representative of VHMC – Cllr Chapman, Cllr Chasemore, Cllr Graves-Morris, Cllr May, Cllr Turner. This leaves one vacancy.
  - Representatives of Upper Thurne working Group – Cllr May
  - Police Liaison Officer – Cllr Standen.
  - Internal Finance Officer – Cllr Chapman
  - Independent Finance Examiner – Mrs Tooke
- Cllr Lovick asked if the Internal audit was a tick box exercise, the clerk replied that it was not.

The above appointments were **approved**.

#### 9. **Correspondence**

There had been a request to purchase a Remembrance Day Wreath. The clerk confirmed could be a S137 expense. This request was **agreed**.

A letter had been received regarding shop front design guide for Great Yarmouth, it was agreed this was not relevant to Potter Heigham.

#### 10. **Adjournment for Public Time**

There used to be deep drains in School Road towards the new houses, but the field had been ploughed in. If there is heavy rainfall the water would have nowhere to go. Cllr Pickering stated that his son is the manager of that field, he is aware of the problem and will dig out the ditches in the autumn.

#### 11. **Planning Matters**

A planning notice had been received for information for tree preservation works to Horse Chestnut trees at Station Road.

**Planning application PF/21/2214 Detached bungalow for agricultural worker at Rookery Farm, Reynolds Lane.** There were no objections. **Action Clerk to respond.**

#### 12. **Reports from Parish Council Officer and other members**

a. Allotments – the invoices have been sent out.

b. Drainage – Cllr May reported there had been no action on the meeting that was held at the bridge when Lathams had been flooded. This needs to be dealt with but should be placed on the October agenda. The person who was in charge at the Environment Agency had retired. A report was being put together by North Norfolk District Council.

c. Footpaths – Cllr Lovick stated that members of the public contact him if there are problems. During the summer Bridge Road had a lot of overhanging trees and bushes, these have been dealt with.

Cllr Lovick expressed concern over Lathams' car park and the road area looking a mess, he will speak to the manager and ask him to tidy it up.

d. Highways – Cllr May reported in Bridge Road from Causeway Cottage to the bridge on the right-hand side the vegetation is encroaching into the road pushing vehicles across the road. There is also a tree down in the dyke. Highways need to clean out the dyke.

**Action Clerk to report to Cllr Richard Price**

Cllr Haslam asked if a third cut had been carried out on the footpaths, particularly at the back of the church - this has been cut once.

e. Staithe Area and Upper Thurne – Cllr May reported that the planters are looking good. The Broads Authority are doing the weeding and trimming up. Nothing to report from UTWG.

f. Police report – no major issues. PC Gibbs had not been able to spend any time in the parish.

### 13. Reports from Other Bodies

a. VHMC – Cllr Graves-Morris reported that the committee met on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, a report will go into the Gazette. Groups using the hall are in decline, yoga is being held via Zoom. Many repairs are needed, and it was agreed to put a hot water system into the disabled toilets in the sum of £640. The produce and craft show was a successful event and enabled those present to recognise David Balls' contribution to the parish. It also celebrated the large number of donations that the committee had been given through various bodies shown on a newly created donor board. Cllr Pauline Grove-Jones recognised the contribution of the sustainable grant from NNDC at this event. The playing field is still not flat enough to be used for football. A member of the VHMC is requesting Christmas decorations to light up the village hall, the village hall should be a focal point. There will be a high cost invoice when the fir trees on the north side of the field are topped. Cllr Chapman had been successful in getting grants from NNDC but the money will not last for long. Cllr Graves-Morris stated that the VHMC needs the annual grant from the Parish Council which was put into the Precept. Brownies and Rainbows will be starting again but they need more helpers.

The hall had been well used before Covid.

b. Trust Fund – Nothing to report.

c. BA/UTWG – nothing to report.

d. NNDC – Cllr Blathwayt reported that it was nice to be in the hall to discuss matters. There have been issues regarding bin collections due to a lack of HGV drivers. If bin collections are missed parishioners should leave their bins out and they will be collected the following day.

Cllr Blathwayt went on to say that he had attended the Broads Access Forum, a fund had been released by Government to provide funding called Farming in the Protected Landscape. The Broads Authority will distribute this money and it would be open to Parish Councils for areas within the protected landscape. This could help with access issues and environmentally sustainable projects. It is not necessary to match fund.

Cllr May reported broken sign for Market Road at the end of School Road. **Action Cllr Blathwayt.**

Cllr May said it might be possible to claim some money to sort out Weavers Way, Footpath 20 which goes beyond High's Mill to Candle Dyke which needs cutting, Footpath 18 also needs cutting.

### 14. Financial Reports

The glass and paper banks have been emptied. Cllr Chapman stated that it is necessary to find out what invoices are outstanding. Cllr Graves-Morris proposed that the village hall grant should be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman. The payment was **approved**.

### 15. Begin 2022/2023 Precept

The clerk and Cllr Chapman will start work on the budget.

### 16. Any Other Business

Cllr Lovick stated that he had attended a webinar that day regarding highways which was interesting and gave details of highway contacts. They also mentioned flooding issues, letters relating to this were given to the Post Office to send out to all the parishioners, this had not been done so Cllr Lovick will chase this up.

Cllr Graves-Morris asked if the website could be an agenda item in future, it needs two people to edit the website. It is the public face of the Parish Council.

Clr Turner stated that she would draft an apology to David Balls. She also stated that Gordon Playford had been a longstanding member of the Parish Council, and this should be recognised. Cllr Turner will also thank Claire Peat for her time as a Councillor. It is important that parishioners know the Parish Council cares. She will also draft a note to Mrs Monsey expressing the Council's sympathy for the recent loss of her husband. Cllr Turner recognized and expressed condolences to Mr. Robin Monsey who was present. She will look into getting some note cards for handwritten letters. Cllr May stated that there is a village crest which could be used.

This part of the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**17. Closed Session**

The information was not available, and this matter could not be dealt with. Cllr Chapman stated that there are seven cheques that have been made out and sent but it is not known what they are for. It is not a criticism but a fact of life. This matter will be dealt with at the October meeting.

Polices will be reviewed in the future.

Cllr Pickering suggested that a painting should be purchased from David Balls to present to Mr Playford at a future meeting. This was **agreed**.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

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Chairman

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Date