

**Parish Chair: Ms Sheridan Turner**

**Locum Parish Clerk: Dan Futter**

**POTTER HEIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Email: [potterheighamparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:potterheighamparishcouncil@gmail.com)**

**MINUTES SEPTEMBER 2023**

**Minutes of the meeting of Potter Heigham Parish Council held on Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 7:30pm in Potter Heigham Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillor Stan Chapman, Councillor Robin Graves-Morris, Councillor Mary Haslam, Councillor Keith Lowes, Councillor Harry May, Councillor Donald Pickering, Councillor Sheridan Turner (Chair), NCC Cllr Richard Price, NNDC Cllr Harry Blathwayt, Locum Parish Clerk Dan Futter and nine members of the public.

Meeting was opened at 7:30 pm.

The Chair read out an email to Council regarding the recent allegations against the Parish Council, which resulted in the Community Speedwatch Team and the Working Group for Road Safety finishing, the Clerk ceasing employment and undermining the Parish Council's integrity. The Chair stated that both the Parish Council and the VHMC are both deeply concerned about these allegations.

The Chair stated her disdain for these allegations and wanted to state this is not a reflection on the council as a whole. The Chair reassured that as a Council we are completely in order, with no financial issues, with everything open and transparent as a Council should be. That as a Council we care deeply about our Parish and that we will continue to do this moving forward. With the loss of a great Clerk, we as a Council have had to fill the void. It is unfortunate that the Community Speedwatch Team and the Working group for Road Safety have finished as they were working incredibly well. A member of the public spoke up in regards to both the Community Speedwatch Team and the Working Group for Road Safety and asked for an apology for the allegations. The Chair stated that the council cannot apologise on behalf of the relevant people but does apologise on behalf of the Council. The Chair stated it is unacceptable for unsubstantiated allegations from councillors to be put up on social media and asked for this to come through the Council in future, and that collective responsibility should be observed.

R. Graves-Morris wanted to make clear that the complaints have been made by three councillors against four councillors.

**1) APOLOGIES** Cllr Standen, and Cllr Bland, Cllr Stone.

**2) PUBLIC FORUM**

**a) Items from the Public**

A resident stated that the benches have not been painted in years, and they need treating. Also, there is a broken hinge on the allotment gate and that a few allotment plots have not been kept tidy. D. Pickering stated that the Council are aware of these issues and will move forward to get them sorted.

#### b) Items from the County Councillor

Cllr Price stated that when he attended the Chief Constable's Safety Conference in Dereham, 97% of attendees were Community Speedwatch. It is one of the most effective forms of decreasing speeding so very sad to hear this has come to an end, and he hopes it will start up again at some point.

The Road Safety Community Fund – he has asked for two painted speed road signs for the village. One to be added to Station Road and the other one 50/100 yards before Mill Road on the Ludham Road. This is an additional sign to emphasise this.

Sam2 – has produced a lot of data but the Police do not have the resources to analyse this. Cllr Price to ask the new Highways Director if a few councillors can jointly fund an AMPR portable camera. This means the Police can prosecute using this piece of equipment. Cllr Price to move forward with this.

#### c) Items from the District Councillor

Cllr Blathwayt stated that North Norfolk is undergoing a peer review with other councils, making judgements on their performance. LGA “debate not hate” campaign maybe worth investigating further for this Parish Council.

Glebe Farm – still waiting for a definitive decision from planning officers. Cllr Blathwayt shared some information with the Chair before the meeting, and will likely call that decision in as it stands at the moment. If it does go to Planning Committee then it is advisable to have a representative from the Parish Council there.

NNDC Local Plan – still going through the inspector's process. The closest major building site to the village is in Ludham. The local plan for the Broads Authority is still being formulated before it goes to the inspector. It would be interesting to see comments regarding thatched roofs, as there have been comments about replacing thatch with pan tiles. Any individuals' comments please get back to the councillor.

Cllr Blathwayt left the meeting at this point.

#### d) Items from Outside Bodies

##### *i) Village Hall Management Committee*

R. Graves-Morris stated they met on the 5<sup>th</sup> September with nine members in attendance, with the previous clerk completing the minutes.

Goal posts – a youngster, whilst swinging on the crossbar that collapsed, fell with some bruising. The contractor was asked to remove the goal posts completely, and to have them recycled. These will be replaced in due course.

Peter Sandell Award Recognition Board – this will go up soon.

Bank account – achieved moving accounts from Barclays to Unity Trust.

The double doors in the VH to be replaced. The higher village hall rates starting on 1<sup>st</sup> October have been accepted by all. The CCTV is up and working and the policy has been ratified. EON has been out and taken a proper meter reading. From the resulting reading it can be seen the VH has been overpaying as a result of paying by direct debit.

Another meeting is scheduled for the 21st November.

Archery request – a resident has asked if he can do some long bow archery practice in the field. VHMC are happy to approve this in principle, but need to know more details around safety. It will take place during the evening or weekends when the field is not being used. R. Graves-Morris proposed in principle as the Parish Council are trustees of the land, that the field can be used for the archery practice. It would affect the insurance but the resident has their own insurance, which is good. In principle the Council are unanimously happy for this to go ahead, which S. Chapman seconded.

R. Graves-Morris requested the payment of the second instalment of the VH grant, when the 2<sup>nd</sup> instalment of the precept is received. All in favour with D. Pickering proposing and M. Haslam seconded.

There are three advertising signs at the back of the building, with no idea who removed them. Happy to get these removed.

*ii) Any other items from Councillors representing Outside Bodies*

None.

### **3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a) To note disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting

None

b) To approve applications for dispensation for pecuniary interests

None

### **4) MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

a) The minutes of the August meeting were circulated. H. May stated that the garage location will need to be added to the minutes. When added, H. May made a motion to approve, second R. Graves-Morris and approved without dissent.

### **5) MATTERS ARISING**

a) S. Turner stated she would enquire if the bridge will be closed for the Ludham Boat Parade. S. Turner will also write to Highways as the Parish Council doesn't support bridge closure, but does approve of pedestrian safety and the weight restriction.

b) R. Graves-Morris stated we have received 38 applications for the vacant clerk's position, with shortlisting already having taken place on the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 4 strong candidates were selected. In person interviews to take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, with the recommendation to be brought back to October's Parish Council Meeting. Estimated start date for the new Clerk will be week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> October. It was stated the same interview questions as before to be used.

S. Turner to submit the Zoom expenses from Sept 11<sup>th</sup> at October's meeting.

c) No other matters arising.

d) Cllr Price stated that the data collection over 2 weeks of the summer months has been completed costing £1,500/week, and that the £5,000 will now need to come from businesses and his personal highways budget, as it will not come from the Broads

Authority., The Parish Council will need to bid for the Parish Partnership funding. Cllr Price will start moving forward with this.

S. Turner stated that the Council agreed to payment of £1,500 subject to other monies being raised, and had not agreed to move forward without this, whilst also agreeing to bid for the Parish Partnership funding.

After discussion it was agreed for Cllr Price to move forward and complete the Parish Partnership Bid on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chair stressed that the complete application will need to come back by mid-October to be scrutinised by Council members (before the November meeting) before being authorised and signed off then. At this point Cllr Price left the meeting.

## **6) CLERKS REPORT**

a) S. Turner stated the Peter Sandell board is to be installed and all highways' issues have been reported.

b) N/A

## **7) GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

a) Already covered earlier in the meeting.

b) Vacancy to be advertised, with both D. Pickering and M. Haslam to assist further.

## **8) FINANCIAL MATTERS**

a) S. Chapman went over this with the Council.

b) Noted with no questions.

## **9) PLANNING MATTERS**

a) New applications received: None

b) Decisions taken: None.: Cllr Blathwayt updated about Glebe Farm earlier in the meeting.

## **10) REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL LEADS**

### **a) Allotments**

D. Pickering stated from NCC's rent review that there is a 33% increase; tenants were advised a year ago of a possible rent increase. It was proposed to spread the cost over three years, with no chance of any further rent reviews over these years. It was agreed that all were in favour, with D. Pickering proposing and H. May seconded.

D. Pickering stated that he will look into getting the gate fixed. A NCC field officer will be coming out to inspect the new hedging, which has taken well. A few weeks ago, the Green Lane track had been strimmed with new hedging weeds cut back. The contractor has been asked to cut the Green Lane hedges again this Autumn. Also, an overgrown tree on the allotment boundary will need to be felled due to constant shade and sucking up all the moisture.

#### b) Highways

K. Lowes stated he has reported all recent highways issues to NCC, but because of lack of progress will need to chase these up again. Clerk to send over a Highways contact. At Lathams a lorry took out a bollard and sign. Highways has been notified and will get this sorted. Also there has been a complaint of overhanging trees opposite Lathams; this will be reported.

#### c) Staithe

H. May stated that around Lathams car park, the roundabout etc it has been cleaned up; with sandbags and rubbish all gone. This is all getting ready for Latham's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There is also a tree growing out of the bridge; which needs to be reported to Highways.

#### d) SAM2

K. Lowes is covering this. Westcotec to be contacted for advice and information. The Clerk to send details to the Councillor.

#### e) Police Liaison

K. Lowes provided report. There have been 9 calls to the Police, 4 no need for action, 3 were diary appointments, 2 emergency calls. All were presented with no issues.

### **11) REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

S. Turner had a report from the Staffing Committee. Everything else has already been discussed.

### **12) CORRESPONDENCE**

#### a) To consider request for a commemorative bench for approval

Deferred to next meeting.

#### b) To note update on the Ludham Illuminated Boat Parade

S. Turner read out an update in Council. D. Pickering to complete sign movement as requested. S. Turner to respond accordingly.

#### c) Increase in Allotment rent

Already covered earlier in the meeting.

#### d) To consider request for use of Village Hall Field for archery practice

Already covered earlier in the meeting.

### **13) OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

#### a) To ratify approval for the feasibility study to move forward and to consider approval of scope of work

Already covered earlier in the meeting.

#### b) To consider complaints from residents around the Falgate Pub

S. Turner stated there have been complaints from several residents about the loud noises in the pub after 11pm and all day on Sundays. S. Turner to contact NNDC Licensing and Highways.

#### c) To consider items for reporting to Highways and/or other authorities

Already covered earlier in the meeting.

**14) ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**15) ITEMS FOR EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

N/A

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 9:36pm

Next meeting Wednesday October 11<sup>th</sup> 2023

DRAFT