

POTTER HEIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

5 Sceptre Close, Hellesdon, Norwich, Norfolk, NR6 5HE

Tel: 07917841665 Email: potterheighamparishcouncil@gmail.com

MINUTES SEPTEMBER 2024

Minutes of the meeting of Potter Heigham Parish Council held on **Wednesday 11th September 2024** at 7.30pm in Potter Heigham Village Hall.

Present: Sheridan Turner, Chair
Donald Pickering, Vice Chair
Glen Ball, Councillor
Helen Bartlett, Councillor
Stan Chapman, Councillor
Robin Graves-Morris, Councillor
Mary Haslam, Councillor
Keith Lowes, Councillor
Harry May, Councillor

In Attendance: Laura Bateman, Parish Clerk
Harry Blathwayt, District Councillor
Richard Price, County Councillor

5 members of the public

The meeting was brought to order at 7.30pm

1)Apologies: David Bland, Councillor
Bev Standen, Councillor
PC Matt Pritty, Norfolk Police

2) Public Forum

- a) A member of the public questioned the cost of running the public toilets in Potter Heigham, as they remembered a previous proposal from the district council to close the toilets provided extortionate figures that did not seem reliable. They expressed deep concerns about the impact the closure of the facilities will have on visitors to the area.

With permission from the chair, Cllr Blathwayt incorporated agenda item 10a, to provide an update on this matter during the public forum. He explained the closure of the public toilets across the region had not yet been passed by cabinet and he would be abstaining from voting due to his role within the Broads Authority. He explained the provision of public toilets was not a statutory duty and the enormous financial constraints faced by North Norfolk District Council would result in some tough decisions on the discretionary services they provide.

Cllr Blathwayt explained there had been some research into the usage of the public toilets throughout North Norfolk and the results found Potter Heigham was one of the lowest used. There was a general consensus from the meeting that the accuracy of these studies was questionable.

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Some public toilets in the district would remain open as they were financially supported by a district council car park.

Cllr Blathwayt explained if the decision is made to close the toilets it has been indicated the district council would gift the toilets to the parish council to take over the running of the facility. He suggested it could be run with a consortium formed of the parish council and local businesses. It was agreed further information regarding the implications of this would be ascertained, however the focus was on keeping the toilets open under the provision of North Norfolk District Council.

Action Parish Clerk

The owner of the Norada Public House expressed concerns over the impact the closure of the toilets would have on the pub. He explained at present he is sympathetic to the general public's needs but should the public toilets close, the increase in demand would have a financial impact on his business as well as a social impact for his employees in managing the conflict with non-paying customers. He would consider the provision of toilets to the public but would need to charge to make it financially viable.

A member of the public mentioned the Broads Authority could provide toilets as they promote the area as a place to visit for tourists.

A member of the public expressed concerns that larger local authorities are downloading their responsibilities onto smaller government bodies. The impact on tourism would be widespread across the county reducing the economic benefits to the whole region and not just the local village.

Cllr Price suggested contacting Herbert Woods to discuss the use of their cleaners to clean the facilities and also to contact Happisburgh Parish Council for further information, as they have recently taken over the running of their public toilets.

Concerns were raised regarding the sanitary impact the closure could have, similar to that of which was experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic when public toilets were closed.

Cllr Blathwayt asked the meeting if the parish council would consider a consortium to run the toilets. Cllr Graves-Morris asked if a business model could be provided from North Norfolk District Council to help the parish council with this decision. The information gained would be collated by the clerk and reported at the October meeting for consideration by the council.

- b) Cllr Price reported there had been a preliminary meeting regarding the traffic feasibility study. Cllr Price indicated the focus of the study would be on either side of The Potter Heigham Bridge and possible turning points for vehicles if the bridge was closed. The implication the study was for the feasibility of the bridge to be closed caused discontent from the meeting as this was not the intention of the parish council when it applied for the Parish Partnership Scheme funding.

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Cllr Price explained the study had to focus on the impact of the bridge being closed to subsequently generate findings and costings for alternative solutions. There was no funding for the bridge to be pedestrianised so this opportunity would provide an extensive and comprehensive report into the road safety in this area including the junction of Station Road, the A149 and the Post Office. The highways manager and highways engineer have indicated to Cllr Price they would support an extension of the 30mph limit in this area which would require a new Traffic Regulation Order costing between £4-6k. Cllr Price stated he would fund half this cost if the parish council funded the remaining half. He suggested the council could apply for the Parish Partnership Scheme for a village gateway however they cost approximately £5-£7k.

It was requested the parish council use their website and social media to promote landowners to cut back their vegetation now that bird nesting season has finished.

ACTION Parish Clerk

Cllr Lowes had met with highways engineer, Justin Le-May. They had tried to find a footpath that used to be on the junction of the Post Office and Station Road but was now overgrown with vegetation, but to no avail. However, since the meeting the vegetation has now been cut back in two places to reveal two fire hydrants, indicating the footpath was once there. Cllr Price would investigate this with highways.

ACTION Cllr Price

Cllr May queried whether the trees growing out of Potter Heigham Bridge were going to be removed. Cllr Lowes had heard this was being dealt with, the clerk will clarify the progress of this issue.

ACTION Parish Clerk

- c) Cllr Blathwayt reported North Norfolk District Council were in negotiations with Norfolk County Council regarding the second home ownership levy and the percentage of this that the district council would receive. He supported Cllr Price's comments about landowners cutting back their vegetation and requested that any notices encouraging this also included the need for cuttings to be cleared from ditches and dykes to avoid any blockages.
- d) i. The Village Hall Management Committees next meeting is to be held on 18th September at 7pm. The public are invited to join for the beginning of the meeting.
 - ii. No other reports were received from outside bodies.

3) Declaration of interest

- a) There were no declarations of interest from members
- b) There were no applications for dispensation for pecuniary interest.

4) Minutes of the last meeting

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Council AGREED to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the August meeting with an amendment to 2b) that the pothole mentioned was on Meadow Court and not Station Road.

Proposed Cllr Chapman, seconded Cllr Haslam, all in favour.

The chairperson brought item 7a) forward to ratify the co-option of Cllr Ball into the position of parish councillor. Proposed Cllr Chapman, seconded Cllr Haslam, all in favour.

5) Matters Arising

The clerk provided an update on the matters arising from the previous meeting which was detailed in report PHPC2 included in the meeting pack. Since the report was circulated it had been confirmed the repairs to the footbridge on Potter Heigham FP13 had been completed.

It was agreed the advice session for CANS would be held on 23rd October at 7.30pm and the village hall would be hired for a duration of 2 hours. The clerk would progress this with CANS.

ACTION Parish Clerk

6) Clerks Report

The clerk updated on matters contained in the report PHPC3 circulated with the meeting pack.

It was agreed the action to request Latham's to display a sign in their car park and to cut back some vegetation would not be per-sued due to a lack of response from the business owner.

The receding drain on the small bridge over the culvert on Bridge Road is believed to be the pavement receding and not a drain. The clerk will re-report this matter.

ACTION Parish Clerk

It was agreed the parish council would not take on any verge cutting responsibilities that were the responsibility of the county council.

Cllr Ball reported there had been an accident outside of the ambulance station on the A149 which could have been prevented if the overgrown vegetation had been cut back.

Cllr Price would report this issue to highways.

ACTION Cllr Price

Cllr May requested an update on how the allotment income can be spent. The clerk was waiting for legal advice from NALC regarding this query before she reported back to the meeting.

7) Governance Matters

- a) Item previously dealt with
- b) The Data Protection Policy was ADOPTED, proposed Cllr May, seconded Cllr Chapman, all in favour

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- c) The Data Privacy Notice was ADOPTED, proposed Cllr May, seconded Cllr Chapman, all in favour
- d) The PKF Littlejohn Notice of Exempt Status from an external audit was noted.

8) Planning

- a) There were no planning matters for consideration
- b) There were no planning decisions to note
- c) Cllr Lowes provided an update regarding the meeting held by The Broad's Authority to the objection received on Tree Protection Order BA/2024/0012/TPO. He explained the meeting was a fact-finding mission and a decision would not be made on the TPO until the planning committee sits. The trees were generally deemed in good health and if the TPO was granted it would mean the trees are regularly monitored by an arborist. The council agreed Cllr Lowes and Cllr May would draft the parish council's representations on the matter by 24th September so the clerk could submit it before the planning committee's next meeting on 27th September. Proposed Cllr Pickering. Seconded Cllr Haslam, all in favour **ACTION Cllr Lowes, Cllr May & Parish Clerk**

9) Financial Matters

- a) The current bank balances were noted.
- b) The payments made and received since the last meeting were noted
- c) The payments due were AGREED to be paid. Proposed Cllr Chapman, seconded Cllr Graves-Morris, all in favour.

10) Other items for discussion/decision

- a) This item was deemed as already dealt with.
- b) A monthly budget of £300 was agreed for the winter warming expenditure without council prior approval. Expenditure must be reported at subsequent meetings.
- c) The date of 27th September for the meeting with Steff Aquarone MP to meet the parish council and the hall hire cost for 2 hours was agreed.
- d) It was agreed the clerk would write to the landowner of the blocked dyke on Marsh Road to request the dyke is dredged.
- e) The quote for the maintenance work was agreed. The clerk will instruct the work to be completed and also get quotes for a replacement bench for consideration for outside the post office. **ACTION Parish Clerk**

11) Correspondence

- a) The latest Broad Briefing was noted
- b) The email received from a resident informing the parish council of a new Neighbourhood Watch group on Market Road was noted

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12) Reports from parish council leads

- a) Cllr Pickering reported one vacant allotment pitch had been let but there are still four vacancies. A notice would be put in the Gazette to advertise the vacancies. **ACTION Cllr Haslam**
- b) Cllr May reported there was a broken post at The Staithe that had left a hole which needed filling and there were ongoing issues with what agency was responsible for replacing some of the quay heading.
- c) No report available regarding SAM2 data.
- d) PC Pritty had emailed statistics of calls to the police and a general update to the clerk. This would be circulated to members.

13) Reports from committees and working groups

No reports received.

14) Any other business

It was noted the latest Broad's Briefing mentioned 5 flood wardens in the area. The clerk will find out their names and report back to council. **ACTION Parish Clerk**

Cllr May reported there will be the highest tide of the year on 20th and 21st September which could cause possible flooding. The Clerk would generate a Facebook post.

ACTION Parish Clerk

The next meeting is on Wednesday 9th October 2024 at 7.30pm

The meeting adjourned at 9:29pm

Chair:

Date: