

MORSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th September, 2023 at the Village Hall, Morston - 7.30pm.

Present: J.Tibbetts (Chair), R.Hamond, C.Ward, J.Temple, R.Reynolds, and the Clerk. Also present were V.Holliday (NNDC), V.Egan (NT) (with her Buildings Project Manager and Architect) PC.Gower-Smith, and three members of the public.

1a. To receive and consider apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. C.Bean and M.Harrison.

1b. To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

No interests declared.

2. To approve the minutes of meeting held 26.7.23.

The minutes, w2hich had already been circulated, were accepted as a true record. (Prop: RH, Sec: JPT).

3a. Public Participation (requests to speak on agenda items)

No requests to speak on agenda items.

3b. To receive reports from District & County Councillors.

V.Holliday (NNDC) had submitted a written report which had been circulated to members. It referred to (a) Environment Agency providing extra funding for Cromer & Mundesley coastal protection works (b) Blakeney Neighbourhood Plan had been passed at a referendum (c) Update re Housing Benefits (d) Update re Housing List (purchase of properties for refugees) (e) Two cases of Legionella in the district (f) Good collection rates for council tax (g) Progress being made re Albert Street toilets in Holt.(h) Update re the proposed closure of Blakeney Surgery (VH updated members and thanked people for their support in fighting the proposed closure). Much information had been circulated by the Clerk from Blakeney PC.

PC Gower-Smith introduced himself and explained that police reports were no longer produced for individual parishes. He was always available to give assistance and hoped he could attend more meetings in the future. He referred to a recent SNAP meeting when priorities for policing were set for the area.

3c. To receive presentation from NT. re proposed toilet block.

V.Egan (NT) introduced the Architect and Project Manager for the proposed new toilet block. They stated that they were completely aware of peoples concerns regarding the AONB and were preparing documents for the pre-app and hoping to make a start on the project next year. A copy of the plans was put on display and explanations given re how they were trying to reduce the impact on the landscape. Various reports had been obtained as to the best way forward. There would be more toilets than at present and staff rooms with a visitors welcome area would be included. They were trying to create a low impact building with cladding that would help it blend into the landscape as much as possible.

At the Chair's suggestion the meeting was closed for all in attendance to ask questions of the National Trust's representatives (Prop: JPT, Sec: CW, agreed)

JT expressed his concerns re access and VE agreed to “take this away with us”. CW, as in the past, was very concerned re the timeline and VE explained that the pre-app in conjunction with Natural England, would be concluded with NNDC. a.s.a.p., the project would then go before a NT Investment Panel, and hopefully building would commence in 2024 and possibly the building would be open in 2025. A parishioner explained her concerns re drainage on to adjacent land and VE said they were working closely with AWA. Another parishioner expressed concerns regarding the much larger size of the proposed building compared to the current toilets and CW agreed with this asking why there was a need for the visitors reception area to be included. RH had real concerns for the AONB and stated that we should be restoring the area and not be creating new buildings. The Chair stated that the PC would get back to the NT and await the planning application with interest, hoping that peoples concerns would be taken on-board. The Chair thanked the NT for their attendance and re-opened the PC meeting.

4. Finance:

(a) To approve the following payments :-

P.Bullimore £354.10 (clerks net salary), HMRC £88.40 (tax on salary)

E-Fire £18.00 (Fire assembly point sign), P.Bullimore £38.95 (clerks exp),

Edward Raison £800.00 (party band), Countrystyle Recycling £30.00 (glass coll)

*** The above payments, as scheduled on the agenda, plus two other payments, were approved (Prop: JPT, Sec: RH). The two other payments were PKF.Littlejohn £252.00 (external audit fee) and F.Newton £900.00 (grass cutting for 3 months)

(b) To consider request for financial assistance from Local Lynx.

RH declared an interest and did not vote It was agreed to donate £250 as in the previous year (Prop: JPT, Sec: CW)

(c) To receive update re Barclays Bank Signature mandate

The Chair updated members explaining that she was still trying to progress the matter.

(c) To receive update re new Financial Strategy & Investment Plan.

Whilst the sum to be invested in Government Bonds had been agreed no further progress had been made because of the delay in organising bank signatories (see 4c)

(d) To note External Audit Report for 31.3.23.

The Clerk read the satisfactory external audit report which would be displayed on the notice board and website.

5. Planning:

(a) To note decisions & information received from NNDC since last meeting.

Nothing received

(b) To consider planning applications received since agenda was printed

None received.

(c) PF/23/1910; Demolition of North Down Hse., and replacement dwelling.

It was agreed that whilst the PC had no objections to the overall design it had concerns re the glazing of the west facing windows and balcony. (reflections affect vessels using the harbour). The PC requested the use of non-reflective glass.

(d) To review the council’s “Between Meetings Planning Policy”

The Chair reminded members about the policy and the need for them to email the Clerk with their decisions prior to the end of the consultation period.

(e) To note PC’s decisions notified to NNDC since last meeting.

The PC had no objections to the following:- PF/23/1501, PF/23/1572, and RV/23/1681. The PC objected to PF/23/1764 (NT Food/Beverage Trailer).

6. Highways and Footpath Matters:

(a) Street Lights – to receive update re the new lights.

The lighting contractors would arrange with UK Power Networks to liaise with CW re the cutting of the hedge near the Havokey when hopefully the new light at this location and the one erected east of the pub could be switched on. The contractors apologised for the delay.

(b) To receive report & consider speeding in the village

RR had been investigating this matter on behalf of the PC and gave a brief update whilst giving a copy of the Norfolk Speed Management Strategy to each councillor. He would report further at the next meeting. He hoped to attend the meeting organised by D.Baker MP re “Rural Speeding” at North Walsham on 29th September.

(c) To note/consider NCC Highways Partnership Scheme 2024/25.

Noted by members and to be carried forward to the next agenda.

Members had received details of the scheme via email on 27/7/23.

7. Meetings & Conferences (announcements & reports)

Rural Speeding meeting as mentioned at 6b (N.Walsham 29/9/23 – 7pm)

PC. Games night at the village hall on 16/10/23 (7pm).

8. Caravan Site and Village Hall:

(a) To receive report re new licence from NNDC

The Clerk reported that most matters referred to in the NNDC report were in hand and it was now just a matter of obtaining a certificate of lawfulness before a new licence would be issued (see 8e)

(b) To receive update re wi-fi in v.hall and NCC’s Connectivity Project

A site visit to carry out a survey had been arranged for 18/10/23.

(c) To receive report re trial community events at the village hall.

The Chair reported that an event had gone well with over 20 people attending. She hoped to have another community event on 16/10/23 when various games could be played.

(d) To consider sign re parking at the village hall

This was now covered in the maintenance log at 8f.

(e) To consider applying for a Certificate of Lawfulness from NNDC.

The Clerk explained that the caravan site needed either (a) planning permission or (b) a certificate of lawfulness. It was agreed that the Clerk proceeds with the latter as the site had been in existence for over half a century and obtaining the certificate would be a formality. (Prop: JPT, Sec: JT).

(f) To consider/approve the Inventory & Mtce Log & work going forward.

The Chair thanked CW for all his help in preparing the inventory/log and asked members to approve that the many minor jobs, marked 1, could be supervised by herself and carried out by “local labour”. (Prop: RH, Sec: JT – agreed). Larger works, marked 2, would be investigated by the Clerk/Chair who would report back to the PC. E.g. external work to the village hall (Prop: RH, Sec: JT – agreed).

(g) To consider re-decoration of toilets (CB)

Covered during 8f.

9. To receive update re proposed closure of Blakeney Surgery.

Many pieces of information had been circulated by the Clerk and the matter had been discussed with Victoria Holliday (NNDC) during item 3b.

10. To receive report re defibrillator for South Close

RR would be investigating further but mentioned defibrillators that were now available that did not require a power supply. Carried forward to next meeting.

11. To receive report re the Morston Regatta 2024.

CW reported on what was an excellent year (2023) and what would be the last regatta which he would be supervising. The regatta itself, the prizegiving, and the evening party had all gone very well. He thanked many people for all their assistance and stated that he was stepping down and passing his “lead role” to Nick Hamond. He would continue to assist and advise on what was a big event in the sailing calendar. The Chair and members thanked CW for all his work over the many years he was in charge.

12. Governance:- To receive report re consider councillors training

The group training night had been successful (10/8/23) and it was hoped to arrange a further session in the spring next year.

13. To consider Village Christmas arrangements.

The Chair had received some feed back and there was good support for a Christmas Hamper being given to parishioners. More work needed to be done regarding costs and the hamper contents and this would be carried forward to the next meeting.

14. To receive correspondence (not included in agenda items above)

There was a brief discussion following an email to the Clerk re litter being dumped which appeared to be from a hiring of the village hall.

15. Public Participation (comments/other matters)

A parishioner expressed concerns re notice boards on land east of the village northn of the A149.

16. To confirm date of next council meeting & future agenda items.

This was confirmed for Wednesday, 25th October, 2023 (7pm).