

MORSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 17th May, 2023 at the Village Hall, Morston - (following the parish meeting)

All members signed their “Declaration of Acceptance of Office” before the meeting.

Present: J.Burdell (Chair for item 1a), J.Tibbetts (Chair), C.Bean, R.Hamond, C.Ward, J.Temple, M.Harrison, R.Reynolds, and the Clerk. Also present were V.Egan (National Trust), V.Holliday (NNDC), and seven members of the public.

1a. To elect Chairman and signing of Declaration

J.Tibbetts was elected Chairman for the coming year and she duly signed her Declaration of Office.(Prop: RH, Sec: JT). J.Burdell vacated the Chair and was thanked by Jill Tibbetts for all his work and valuable input over many years.

1b. To elect Vice-Chair and signing of Declaration

R.Hamond was elected Vice-Chair and signed her Declaration of Office (Prop: CW, Sec: CB).

1c. To receive and consider apologies

No apologies.

1d. To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

No interests declared.

2. To approve the minutes of meeting held 26.4.23.

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

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

The Chair received requests to speak on 3c and 8b.

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

Dr.V.Holliday (NNDC) reported on the following :- (a) composition of NNDC membership following the elections (b) coastal maintenance work (c) the Community Connectors are on Poppyland Radio (d) solar port at The Reef in Sheringham & alternative funding re fuel payments. She also spoke about the Mental Health & Awareness Week with the various meetings arranged, and referred to the Blakeney Surgery situation. RR expressed his concerns re the proposed closure of the Blakeney Surgery and VH gave a brief update. An official application for closure had been made to the NHS Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board and there had been a press release regarding this today. Vast numbers of people had objected to the proposed closure and there would be a Commissioners meeting on 13th June. D.Baker MP had sent a survey to approx.. 1,000 people and RR hoped more and more people would respond. RH urged people to write as individuals and the Chair said she would email her village group to try and get people to express their concerns. This matter would be placed on the next agenda.

3c. To receive report from NT.

V.Egan (NT) referred to the proposed toilets stating that Natural England's report was frustrating but NNDC Planning had stated that matters needed to be dealt with via them. Ecology consultants were now involved and Anglian Water had many requirements that needed to be met before the project could proceed. Conversations with Norfolk CC were also ongoing re changing places facilities. There was much to sort out with architects fees, and quantity surveyors estimates re the cost of the project being requested. A further meeting with NNDC had been arranged for next month after which time she would report further to the PC. JT expressed his concerns regarding the car park project and CW said he was very frustrated with the whole scheme which had been talked about for years. JT also raised the subject of the state of the local bridges questioning when they would be repaired. A parishioner expressed his concerns regarding the handling of the whole toilet project and particularly the "development" of what is a beautiful area. The Chair, who had concerns re time-scales, brought the discussion to a close and V.Egan left the meeting.

4. Finance:

(a) To approve the following payments :-

P.Bullimore £354.10, HMRC £88.40, F.Newton £300.00, P.Tibbetts £84.20, SWAMP £1,000.00, P.Bullimore £41.63 , T.Leach £60.00, Arthur J.Gallagher Insurance £2,498.02.

*** The above payments, as scheduled on the agenda, plus one other payment were approved (Prop: RH, Sec: CW). The other payment was to Countrystyle Recycling in the sum of £30.00 for glass collection.

(b) To consider renewal of insurance.

This matter was discussed prior to 4a above. The Clerk reminded members of the recent insurance review and the fact that the valuation of the PC assets had been greatly increased. Members were issued with a copy of an insurance declaration which needed to be returned to him in strictest confidence if they had anything to declare. Members agreed to renew the insurance with payment being made at 4a.

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.

6. Highways and Footpath Matters:

(a) To receive further update re maintenance of the pond.

The Chair stated she would give a brief report at item 12.

(b) To receive update re street lighting.

The Clerk had no further update and he would chase the contractor. (as last month sub-contractors prices were still awaited as was permission to use the existing pole adjacent to Point House).

(c) To further consider the parking area east of church (surface)

With the surface still in satisfactory condition it was agreed to remove this matter from the agenda.

(d) To receive update re grass cutting.

The Clerk reported his conversation with the contractor and hoped things would now run smoothly.

7. Meetings & Conferences (announcements & reports)

The Clerk had no announcements.

8. Caravan Site and Village Hall:

(a) To receive update re purchasing of new village hall chairs.

CW reported that he was hopeful the chairs would be delivered by the end of the month.

(b) To further consider a montage/collection of mementos for village events.

A parishioner outlined his proposals stating that he envisaged six frames of pictures recording village events. He would make up digital posters and bring a sample for members to view before proceeding further. The estimated cost to the PC was £373 as he would provide his labour free. Members were enthusiastic and asked him to proceed by producing a sample picture (Prop: CW, Sec: JT).

(c) To receive update re a fixed electricity supply contract.

The Clerk informed members that a broker (Utility Aid) had found some cheaper prices if the PC was willing to enter into a fixed contract of between 12 and 36 months. The total estimated village hall bill would amount to approx. £1600 for the coming year and savings of 3% to 8% might be achieved as long as electricity prices did not fall. Many members thought this to be the case (prices dropping) which meant the PC would end up paying more on a fixed price contract rather than staying on the flexible plan. It was agreed to stay on the current E-on Flexible Plan (Prop: JPT, Sec: CW).

(d) To receive report re new tenancy agreements & NNDC Licence.

The Clerk informed members that 4 out of 6 tenants had signed and returned their new agreements. The other two tenants had paid and would be returning their agreements shortly. He read an email from NNDC stating that they wished to inspect the caravan site as they had some concerns that they wished to discuss. It was hoped that the Chair and Clerk would meet them on site during the next few weeks.

CW suggested purchasing a new clock for the hall – agreed (Prop: JPT, Sec: RH)

9. To consider and re-adopt the General Power of Competence.

It was agreed that Morston PC meets the criteria for the GPOC as prescribed by the Secretary of State (minimum of two thirds of members elected and employment of a qualified clerk) and further agreed to re-adopt the GPOC (Prop: JPT, Sec: CB).

10. Update re use of v. hall for Wells Comm.Hosp. outreach programme.

RH reported that the organisation was looking at other venues and she would report further at the next meeting.

11. To receive report re the Morston Regatta 2023.

CW reported that all was in hand and he wanted members to consider bringing back the prizegiving and social event in the evening for next year.

12. To receive report re the Coronation event.

JPT asked the Chair of SWAMP to give a report. There had been a good turnout with parishioners consuming cakes and wine at the pond site. Work had also been carried out with a dead hedge being constructed. This was a good village event and the Chair thanked people for their support.

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

Nothing received.

14. Public Participation (comments/other matters)

No further comments or matters arising.

15. To confirm date of next council meeting

This was confirmed for Wednesday, 28th June, 2023 - 7pm.

The Annual Accounts and Governance Statement would be on this agenda