

**Minutes of the Meeting of Witton and Ridlington Parish Council held on
Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7pm remotely on Zoom**

Present: Clive Stockton (Chairman)
Richard Barker
Rebecca Barringer
Gillian Owles
Eric Seward
Lucy Shires
Catherine Moore, Parish Clerk

Also present: One member of the public was in attendance

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Public Forum

a) Public

A member of the public thanked the Councillors for the work they had been doing to restart the Council.

b) County Councillor

Eric Seward reported that the County Council had been dealing with a lot of trees that had come down in the high winds in September, and he asked to be made aware of any that were outstanding. The County Council was consulting on the proposed budget for next year, with the most relevant matter for the Parish Council being a proposed reduction in verge cutting.

District Councillor

Clive Stockton reported that North Norfolk District Council was assisting communities and giving grants during the second lockdown. A virtual community hub had been set up to provide local assistance.

3. Declaration of Interest for items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2020

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and would be signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

a) Norfolk County Council Electoral Boundary Review

Eric Seward reported that the boundary review consultation was open for comment, although the outcome was delayed due to Covid. It was expected that if elections went ahead in May 2021, they would be on existing boundaries. There were no comments by the Council on the proposed changes to the electoral boundaries.

b) Banking Administration Update

The Clerk reported that a cheque had been written for the balance from the Lloyds account, which was £8,681.88, and would be sent to Unity as soon as it was received back from councillors following signing. It was confirmed that Unity Trust Bank offered online banking and cheque facility.

c) Dog Bins

The Council had taken over responsibility for the dog bin at Ebridge Mill although a bill had not yet been received. After consultation with the community, a bin location for Witton that would be accessible for emptying could not be agreed therefore signage had been requested. The Clerk was asked to buy two 'No Dog Fouling' signs which would be fixed to wooden posts. The offer for a dog bin in Witton would remain open.

ACTION: Clerk

It was **agreed** that the Ridlington dog bin would be at the corner of the new playing field to the left of the farm track, the Clerk was asked to make an application for a Streetworks Licence and to commission the bin once this had been approved.

ACTION: Clerk

d) Noticeboards

Clive Stockton reported that he would be fixing a hasp to the bottom of the notice boards, to be used with a padlock. It was noted that the white board to the right of the Ridlington notice board may have once held a footpath map, and could be used for community notices.

ACTION: CS

e) Name of the Parish Council

No feedback had been received about this from the community newsletter article, and Gillian Owles reported that conversations locally had shown that most people thought that this change had been made some time ago. There were no further public comments at the meeting, and the Clerk was asked to report this back to North Norfolk District Council.

ACTION: Clerk

6. **Co-option of Parish Councillors**

There had been no further applications for the remaining vacancy. Councillors agreed to speak to people locally who they thought might be interested. **ACTION: All**

7. **Finance**

a) Financial Update

The financial update was noted, reporting that the Council had £11,059.62 in the bank as of 31st October 2020. Free funds were £4,107.00, plus a general reserve of £4,500.00.

b) Payments

It was **agreed** to pay the following:-

C Moore	Salary & Expenses	£293.38
HMRC	PAYE	£66.60
Indigo Waste	Recycling	£16.20
Norfolk PTS	Training – 2 councillors	£100.00

8. **Correspondence**

a) Norfolk County Council Budget Consultation

Eric Seward outlined the proposals for the NCC budget for 2021/22, with the main areas of interest for parish councils being the reduction in hours at recycling centres by one hour in the summer; and the reduction in rural verge cutting from two cuts to one cut per year. It was noted that verges would be cut where there was a safety requirement, and it was felt that the timing of the cut was important – this was not noted within the consultation. It was felt that people cared about how tidy their local environment was, and there were concerns about reduced visibility and road safety. It was **agreed** to respond stating that the Parish Council felt that cutting should remain at two per year.

ACTION: Clerk

b) Representative on Norfolk Association of Local Councils

There were no volunteers wishing to attend the above meetings.

c) General Correspondence

None.

9. **Planning**

PF/20/1838 7 Witton Heath Cottages: Single Storey Extension

It was felt that this was an attractive design which would not affect any neighbours and was in keeping with the area. It was **agreed** to support the application.

ACTION: Clerk

PF/20/2028 Ash Tree Farm, Well Street, Witton: Erection of two one and a half storey dwellings and associated development.

The Clerk drew councillor's attention to the letter submitted by the applicant. It was noted that planning had previously been approved on the site and had lapsed, and a resubmission in 2019 had been refused as it was outside the development boundary. Councillors felt that this should be the final development on the site, and that it should contain no more than the original 2014 application. It was **agreed** that there were no objections to the application.

ACTION: Clerk

10. **Other Matters**

a) Vattenfall Update

Clive Stockton reported that Vattenfall were offering 15 minute telephone consultations to discuss the proposed scheme and gave the number where this could be arranged. A suite of documents was available on the Vattenfall website. It was noted that where cabling would come ashore, ducting would be installed so that future cabling could be pulled through instead of further land disturbance. A precis of the scheme to date would be circulated. It was noted that test boring was taking place.

b) Bank Signatories

It was **agreed** that Rebecca Barringer, Richard Barker and Gillian Owles would be added as bank signatories. The Clerk was asked to arrange this.

ACTION: Clerk

c) Training Contribution

It was **agreed** to contribute £15 towards the Clerk's attendance at the virtual Practitioners Conference in February 2021.

d) Parish Partnership Scheme

The Clerk reported that the cost of a SAM2 speed monitoring device plus 4 posts would be £3,556, which could be 50% funded through the Parish Partnership Scheme. The device was designed to be moved around and would need someone to take responsibility for moving it every six weeks, as well as changing and charging the batteries. The fixed Vehicle Activated Signs were discussed but it was felt that these were less effective. It was felt that the SAM2 would be too burdensome to be practical. Other speed mitigation measures were discussed, and the Clerk gave prices for village gateways which were £1,577 per pair. It was felt that these would be appropriate either side of Ridlington village, noting that they had to be located at the existing speed limit sign, and should be in white to have the greatest effect. It was **agreed** to make an application for two sets of village gateways.

ACTION: Clerk

- e) Updating of Village Notice Boards
Rebecca Barringer volunteered to keep the notice boards up to date.
- f) Rented Land in Witton
The Clerk reported that the land agent recommended by another local parish council would charge £250 to assist with negotiating the rent review. It was **agreed** to go ahead with this. **ACTION: Clerk**
The Clerk reported that the tenant had asked permission to enter the land into environmental schemes, ahead of changes to the Basic Payment Scheme of agricultural subsidies. It was **agreed** that permission in principle would be given to enter land into the entry level stewardship schemes, pending the outcome of the rent review which the Council would seek to conclude quickly. Councillors were made aware that environmental schemes lasted five years and were inherited by a new tenant in the event of a change of occupier. **ACTION: Clerk**
- g) Playing Field in Ridlington
The Clerk confirmed that the approximate cost of grass cutting for the playing field would be £500/year for w to 4 weekly cuts in the growing season. The licence fee would be £100/year. The Council was able to use £200 of reserves to offset first year costs, and they could then be absorbed into future budgets. The owners had stated that there was to be no play equipment as they wished to reserve the right for future change of use of the land. It was **agreed** to go ahead with the licence and to obtain prices for grass cutting for the 2021 season. **ACTION: Clerk**
- h) Phone Boxes
It was noted that the phone box in Witton was vandalised within days of the last refurbishment. The Ridlington phone box needed tidying up. It was felt that the Ridlington phone box should be retained and suggested it could house a defibrillator. The Clerk noted that a full conversion to defibrillator would cost around £1,700, with ongoing costs for batteries and pads. It was **agreed** that the Witton phone box could be sold (buyer to decommission and remove) – Clive Stockton to speak with Paston Parish Council regarding this. **ACTION: CS**
- i) Budget and Precept 2021/22
The budget was revised to reflect the amendments to the Parish Partnership Scheme project. It was **agreed** to set the precept at £3,535 (Band D £27.07, 0% increase). **ACTION: Clerk**

11. **Dates of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 7pm at Witton & Ridlington Village Hall, or on Zoom depending on government guidance at the time.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

CHAIRMAN