

MULBARTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on

7.30pm on Monday 2nd August 2021

Councillors present:

Derek Aldous, Adam Banham, Beverley Leek, Gerald Peachey, Emma Reeve & Steve Sewell

1.0 District and County Councillors' Report

District Cllr Legg reported:

- that SNC staff were still mainly working from home and members of the public needed to “book” to attend the few public meetings that are being held
- SNC’s village cluster document has been published which recommends 35 new homes for Mulbarton
- Wind farms – he would let the Chairman report further on these later in the meeting
- Thickthorn junction – nothing new to present
- Lotus having launched their last new petrol car are planning to create 200 new jobs
- SNC and Broadland District Councils are looking at combining more office space, though he thought there may be a requirement for satellite offices to allow residents to still make enquiries/payments in person without travelling long distances
- He had received a complaint about the hedge of 86 Cuckoofield Lane encroaching onto the pavement

In response to a question about the Humbleyard Surgery, Cllr Legg reported he had attended a meeting with the Humbleyard Practice, a Hethersett developer and other interested parties where it was noted that the surgery was having problems with their service due to the number of homes being built and also staffing problems. He reported that none of the three practice buildings could be enlarged and although the developer may offer land for a new practice in Hethersett other parties would need to be engaged and cooperative for example SNC and NHS England.

District Cllr Francis reported:

- Things were generally quiet at SNC
- SNC are looking at recycling improvements and have been actively prosecuting fly-tippers. He encouraged all to report any fly tipping to SNC for investigation.

Cllr Legg reported that SNC’s waste depots were stretched in regards to staffing levels partly as a result of the current “ping-demic” and if necessary they would temporarily cease brown bin collections.

Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Clifford-Jackson.

County Councillor Daniel Elmer introduced himself to the meeting and reported:

- That the County Council were suffering delays to some essential services.
- A draft report on flooding was starting to be circulated amongst interested parties and amendments could still be made to this document.
- Highways are starting a four year project visiting all districts to spend a fund aimed at reducing speeding such as improving speed humps or introducing SAM’s. Mulbarton is likely to be in year three of this project.

1.1 Public Session

A representative from MALGA thanked MPC for moving the gate at the Swamp allotments and improving safety whilst accessing and exiting the site. Following discussion about the information given to the contractor it was agreed that any future requests from MALGA to MPC would include a detailed work scope to prevent any misunderstanding of the exact request being made.

In response to a concern about access to the Meadows allotment site, Cllr Leek clarified that there had never been vehicle access to allotments at the site and all allotment holders were aware of this and unfortunately there had previously been some abuse of the key access to the gate which had been provided for emergency use only.

2.0 To close the meeting to public participation

Cllr Aldous closed the meeting to public participation and formally started the Parish Council meeting.

3.0 To receive and consider apologies for absence

Cllr Tucker's apologies were received and accepted.

4.0 To receive declaration of interest on items on the agenda

Cllr Banham declared an interest in matters relating to items 17, 18 and 19.

5.0 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Council meeting and Parish Council Meeting held on 21 June 2021

A correction to this agenda item was noted in that the Annual Council meeting minutes had been confirmed and signed at the June meeting and this item was to confirm and sign the minutes from the ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 21st June 2021.

The minutes of the ordinary Parish meeting held on 21 June 2021 were unanimously agreed as a true record of the meeting after being proposed by Cllr Reeve and seconded by Cllr Sewell.

6.0 To receive financial report and approve invoices for payments as per schedule for June & July

Cllr Aldous reported that at the May meeting it was agreed that in order for June's payments to be paid in a timely manner, the Clerk would check and then circulate the payment schedule to all Councillors and then arrange for the cheques to be signed and for the full Council to then retrospectively approve them at the next available meeting.

Following proposal by Cllr Peachey and seconding by Cllr Banham all payments for June were unanimously retrospectively approved. A copy of the payments is attached to these minutes.

Following proposal by Cllr Leek and seconding by Cllr Reeve all payments for July were duly passed. A copy of the payments is attached to these minutes.

Cllr Aldous reported that councillors had been provided with a new financial report this month that tracked expenditure against budget and noted that to date half the precept had been spent with notable works being completed on the play areas, trees on Orchard Park, and work on the Common.

6.1 To review quotes and appoint contractor for replacement sleepers at the Jubilee Gardens

Cllr Leek reported that four contractors had been asked to quote for this work scope and two had provided quotes. Following discussion of the quotes, Cllr Leek proposed that Contractor 1 be appointed to complete the work; this was seconded by Cllr Peachey and unanimously agreed.

6.2 To review quotes and appoint contractor for lowering the water troughs at the Meadows and Swamp allotment sites

Cllr Leek reported that four contractors had been asked to quote for this work scope but only one had responded. Following discussion of the work scope and the quote for work on the four water troughs, Cllr Leek proposed that Contractor 1 be appointed to complete the work; this was seconded by Cllr Sewell and unanimously agreed.

6.3 To review quotes and appoint contractor for maintenance work at the Long Lane allotment site

Cllr Leek reported that four contractors had been asked to quote for this work scope but only one had responded. Following discussion of the work scope and the quote for the work Cllr Leek proposed that Contractor 2 be appointed to complete the work; this was seconded by Cllr Banham and unanimously agreed. Cllr Leek reported that once the contractor has advised a suitable time to complete the work she would liaise with tenants that currently have plots to minimise disruption and to encourage take up of any remaining plots by those that had previously shown an interest in the site.

6.4 To review quotes and appoint contractor for a commercial waste bin and collection

Following discussion all councillors agreed in principle that a waste collection service was needed to ensure that the Orchard Park and skate park bins were emptied on a regular basis. Three quotes had been received.

Following discussion of the three quotes, Cllr Reeve proposed that Contractor 2 be awarded the contract; this was seconded by Cllr Leek and unanimously agreed.

6.5 To review costs for the provision of netball posts for the MUGA

Following discussions, Cllr Leek proposed that a set of netball posts be ordered; this was seconded by Cllr Peachey and unanimously agreed.

6.6 To review quotes and appoint contractor for works to tree on Orchard Park

Cllr Aldous reported that the urgent work that needed to be actioned had now been completed and the work scope and quotes for review were for the non-urgent work on the remaining trees. Four contractors had been approached. During discussion it was noted that the two quotes that had been returned were very similar in price and therefore would it be advisable to use the contractor that had completed the original survey.

Following discussion Cllr Aldous proposed that the contractor who completed the original survey (Contractor 1) be appointed to complete the work; this was seconded by Cllr Banham and unanimously agreed.

7.0 Contingency planning for any further meeting restrictions

During discussion it was noted that any future lockdowns or Government restrictions could affect MPC's ability to hold meetings in public and there was therefore a need to have in place contingency plans for [a] payment schedule approval to ensure invoices and contractors are paid on a timely basis and [b] any works that may need full council agreement. The legislation allowing Parish Councils' to hold meeting remotely ceased in May this year so that would not be an option if any restrictions were imposed again.

Following discussion Cllr Peachey proposed:

[a] Should a meeting not be taking place on the first Monday of the month, due to Government guidance, then the Clerk, as RFO, is given delegated authority to check and then circulate a payment schedule to all councillors. Once all Councillors have confirmed their agreement to the payment schedule the Clerk will arrange for cheques to be signed and then retrospective approval will be made by the full council at the next available meeting. This resolution should stand for 12 months.

[b] Should a meeting not be taking place on the first Monday of the month, due to Government guidance, then the Clerk, as the Proper Officer of the Council, is given delegated authority to recommend work to be completed and make the necessary arrangements, following discussion with the Chairman and after receiving a quorate response in favour from councillors. This resolution should stand for 12 months.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Leek and unanimously agreed.

Cllr Aldous advised the meeting that he was going to move to agenda items 15 and 16 to allow for County Councillor Elmer to hear any discussions of these items prior to him leaving the meeting.

15.0 Update on wind farms

Cllr Aldous provided a report on recent developments affecting the local area. A copy of the received report will be added to MPC's website.

Following discussions, which included the question as to whether the impact of the wind farm proposals on the village could justify MPC approving a further budget for independent advice should it be needed, Cllr Aldous proposed that expenditure of up to £2,000 for independent advice to MPC in relation to wind farms and related projects and their associated infrastructure be approved; this was seconded by Cllr Banham and unanimously approved.

16.0 Update on Solar Farms

Cllr Peachey reported that the Bracon Ash proposal was still at the decision stage and Bloy's Grove was pending an Environmental Impact Assessment. It was noted that EDF renewables have recently sent out correspondence about their proposed biodiversity plans at the Bloy's Grove site.

Following discussion it was noted that no decision or action was required by MPC on this item at present.

Cllr Aldous advised that the meeting would now be returning to agenda item 8.

8.0 To receive the annual play inspection report

The annual play inspection report was received and noted. Following discussion it was agreed that any items for action would be referred to the outstanding works working group.

9.0 Working group report on completing items on the outstanding works list & next working group meeting

Following discussion it was unanimously agreed to move the next meeting of the outstanding works working group to a new date of 17 August.

Cllr Banham reported that the next outstanding works working group would be discussing the play inspection report and possible work scopes for the Meadows play equipment, the Common/Village Hall play equipment and repairs to the finger post signs on the Common.

10.0 Norfolk County Council's Parish Partnership Scheme Initiative

Following discussion it was agreed that "shortlisted" ideas/projects would be forwarded to and discussed by the outstanding works working group.

11.0 To consider requests from the Football Club:

11.1 A pa system to be installed for use on match days, it would be a wireless system which we would control from the tea hut.

11.2 To finish the path all around the pitch, continuing at its current size of 1 meter wide by 150mm deep

11.3 To situate a 20ft container next to the tea hut, behind the trees to obscure it from view, for storing groundsman machinery and equipment and festival equipment and cabling

The Football Club working group reported that they had reviewed requests 11.1 – 11.3 and their recommendation to the full council was that these requests be added to the ones previously received that were due to be discussed at October's meeting so that all requests could be reviewed and discussed collectively. This was unanimously agreed by all councillors.

11.4 To use car park for a Xmas Fayre on 19th December: 3pm to 10pm

It was noted that this request is not from the Football Club but from an individual.

Following discussions where concerns and questions were raised it was unanimously agreed to write to the individual for further details before an informed decision could be made. Additional information required includes: who would have overall liability for the event, how the event would be laid out in the car park, what is the charitable status of the event (MPC does not allow commercial activity in the car park), a copy of the risk assessment and details of insurance/public liability cover.

12.0 Treetops request for works to the outside area at the back of the village hall

During discussion it was noted that the requesting organisation is a business not a charity and hire of the village hall does not include the outside area; the outside space is a public area and more clarification is required. Following discussions it was agreed to request more details in order to make an informed decision.

Cllr Reeve proposed that the requested change to put bamboo fencing around the container be approved so that this work could be completed before the end of the school holidays; this was seconded by Cllr Banham and unanimously approved.

13.0 Update on discussions with Ian Holdsworth Chartered Surveyors (IHCS) and their request for Cadent Gas to install a gas governor on MPC's land

It was noted that there was no update on this proposal and no decision or action was required by MPC at present.

14.0 Update on renewal of EE & Three mast agreement

It was noted that there was no update on this proposal and no decision or action was required by MPC at present.

Items 15 and 16 were discussed earlier in the meeting.

17.0 To receive an update from the meeting with SNC's Director of Place

Cllr Banham left the meeting.

Cllr Aldous reported that following the meeting with SNC's Director of Place in May, MPC had asked two questions relating to what discretion a local planning authority has to take into account cumulative impact, and whether SNC has a policy covering this; and if not, will they be producing one. The reply received in June had not answered these questions. A further email was sent and MPC are awaiting a response.

Cllr Aldous announced that he was adjourning the meeting to allow Cllr Legg to speak.

Meeting adjourned

Cllr Legg reported a recent EDP article had quoted SNC as saying that they "took all this into consideration" and he felt this was something that should be challenged.

Meeting resumed

18.0 GNLP SNC village cluster document

Cllr Aldous report that MPC's nine page response to the Village Cluster Housing Allocation Plan (VCHAP) had been submitted prior to the closing date and contained its objections to the proposed 35 houses on land south of Rectory Lane (on the Bluebell estate), and also to other sites mentioned in the area. Cllr Aldous thanked all councillors for their team work in completing the response.

19.0 To consider planning applications received

2021/1570: 21 Cuckoofield Lane. Proposed two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

It was noted that the proposals in this application were similar to alterations already made to other properties in the area so would not be out of place and that neighbouring properties have a right to submit their own comments if they have any objections.

Cllr Banham re-joined the meeting.

20.0 Correspondence requiring consideration

- Police Street Surgery – Sunday 8th August at 2pm at the Co-op.

21.0 Liaison officer reports

Cllr Aldous reported that the Mulbarton Common Steering Group had meet on 19th July. His summary report of the meeting was received and its contents noted. Cllr Aldous commented that the recent programme of maintenance tasks planned by the Parish Council was now completed. The next meeting is due to discuss work on the ponds, with Birchfield Pond being the next priority.

Cllr Aldous report he had participated in the Town & Parish Council forum on 20th July; and a summary report was received and noted. Cllr Aldous stated that most of the discussions topics at the forum had already been covered by the District Councillors earlier in the meeting.

Cllr Aldous reported that he attended the previously mentioned healthcare provision meeting at the invitation of Cllr Legg. As an update was provided earlier in the meeting, his report was received and noted.

Cllr Peachey reported that MPC was disappointed that they had not received a CAF grant for a pump track due to the question of planning permission. The project has not been abandoned and other funding streams are being looked at. Cllr Peachey requested that potential ways forward including the planning issue be discussed at a working group for options to be formulated for the full Council to then review. This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Aldous announced that he was adjourning the meeting to allow Cllr Legg to speak.

Meeting adjourned

Cllr Legg noted that any advice from SNC regarding planning consent would be at a cost.

Meeting resumed

Cllr Leek reported that an email had been received from the Oakley Park (South) allotment holders regarding the communal area and she wished to recommend that MPC meet them face to face on site to discuss their proposals. Cllr Peachey offered to accompany Cllr Leek to this meeting and both would then be able to update MPC at the September meeting.

Cllr Aldous thanked Cllr Leek for all efforts with the four allotment sites and noted that a lot of work had been completed behind the scenes.

The Clerk gave an update on the Community Speed watch: the lead organiser has recruited the minimum number of volunteers needed to set the group up and Norfolk Police have identified suitable sites within the village from which the Speed Watch can operate. The next step is for the volunteers to be trained. MPC has previously agreed to cover the cost of hiring a venue for this training.

22.0 To receive any items for inclusion on the next agenda.

No Councillor had any items for inclusion in the next agenda in addition to those already noted.

23.0 To adjourn the meeting for the 2nd public session

A representative from MALGA asked if consideration could be given to change the allotment rent year from May to January.

Cllr Legg reported that the north end of the Meadows had not been recommended by SNC for housing in their VCHAP, and as previously suggested, MPC may wish to put a bid in for the land. It was noted that this area is amenity land that supports the Lark Rise area of the village with additional amenity facilities.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

The next meeting will take place on Monday 6th September at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at the Village Hall.

Payments for June 2021

Cheque Number	Recipient	Details	Net total	Vat	Amount £'s
102730	Iceni T/A NTS Partnership	May & June Jubilee Gardens maintenance	136.00		136.00
102731	D Aldous	Expenses	40.50		40.50
102732	G Peachey	Expenses	40.50		40.50
102733	Mulbarton Church	Community Choir Grant	120.00		120.00
102734	A Phillips	Expenses	37.64	3.76	41.40
102735	A Phillips	Salary	853.48		853.48
102736	HMRC	PAYE	313.22		313.22
102737	Rackham & Son Engineering Ltd	Supply & fit lock & handles for Puddleducks gate	312.00	62.40	374.40
102738	Ribbonsdale Nurseries	Grounds maintenance	1158.57	211.71	1370.28
		Total for month:	3011.91	277.87	3289.78

Payments for July 2021

Cheque Number	Recipient	Details	Net total	Vat	Amount £'s
102739	Talking Elm	Tree survey & map	450.00	90.00	540.00
102740	M Williams	2 years domain & hosting + website updates	175.68		175.68
102741	Bartlett Signs	8 x play area signs	152.00	30.40	182.40
107242	David Bracey	Play inspection	180.00	36.00	216.00
102743	B Leek	Expenses	19.80	3.61	23.41
102744	A Phillips	Salary	798.73		798.73
102745	HMRC	PAYE	276.22		276.22
102746	Ribbonsdale Nurseries	Grounds Maintenance	1158.57	211.71	1370.28
102747	DJ Ireland Groundworks & Paving Services	Maintenance work on the Common & work on allotment gates & fence	4331.74	866.35	5198.09
102748	Talking Elm	Priority works to T1, T7 and T8 on Orchard Park	2390.00	478.00	2868.00
		Total for month:	9932.74	1716.07	11648.81