

**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL WEST DEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD at 7.00pm
On THURSDAY 1st OCTOBER 2020**

Attending by Zoom (Five Councillors) :- Nick Drew (ND), Stuart Glover (SB), Keith Gore (KG), Lorraine Hunt (LH) Chair and Susan Pepper (SP)

In attendance: Peter King, Parish Clerk, and 9 members of the public, on-line.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1. **To receive Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Tim Glover (on a Councillor training course).
 2. **To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items**
The Parish Councillors confirmed that they had no personal interests for items coming up on the agenda.
 3. **Notice regarding use of social media, audio recording of Parish Council meeting and invitation for public contributions.**
LH asked "Will anyone present be filming, recording blogging or tweeting during this meeting? There was no response from the members of the public on-line. LH noted that the meeting is audio recorded to assist the Parish Clerk in the writing of the minutes.
 4. **Minutes of the Virtual Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd September 2020**
LH confirmed that all Councillors had seen the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd September 2020.
The Councillors agreed that they were content with the amended minutes and that they should be signed as a true record. LH as Chair will sign the minutes at the earliest opportunity.
 5. **Matters Arising**
 - 5.1 **Additional Signage - A134 at Lime Kiln Road and Bath Road Junctions** - The Parish Clerk reported that he is waiting on the Norfolk County Council Highways (NCC-HD) for their advice on sign design and costings. The Parish Clerk noted that it had been reported that two existing A 134 direction signs near to the junction with Lime Kiln Road had been turned 180^o and this had been reported to NCC-HD.
 - 5.2 **Potholes** – The Parish Clerk reported that the large pothole in the wooded area of Lime Kiln Road had now been filled. The Parish Clerk stated that he had reported further potholes in Ryston Road and Basil Rd and noted that there was still an outstanding one in Hilgay Road. The Parish Clerk added that Parishioners should either continue to report potholes to him by email or go to either the NCC or Parish Council websites and make a report following the on-line advice.
 6. **Reports**
 - 6.1 **Chair's Report**
 - 6.1.1 The Chair reported that Councillors had carried out a thorough shortlisting process of 14 applicants for the advertised post of a new Parish Clerk. The Chair noted that over two evenings, Councillors had carried out on-line interviews with 6 candidates and had made an appointment subject to references and look forward to inviting the appointed Clerk to the next Parish Council meeting. The Chair noted her thanks to Parish Councillors for their time and hard work leading up to making the appointment.
 - 6.2 **Parish Clerk's Report**
 - 6.2.1 **Correction to Minutes of 6th August 2020** – The Parish Clerk noted that the minute (6.2.7) stated that under the Parish Clerk's report, reference was made to the 5th March Parish Council minutes regarding the agreement for the purchase of a new laptop and software, when the minute should have
- Agreed as a true record of the Meeting: Signed Date

just recorded that the purchase of the laptop and software had been made with previous funding obtained.

6.3 Handyman's Report – The Parish Clerk noted that the report covered September.

6.3.1 Carried out timber repairs to one of the Church Road planters and its wood staining has been completed.

6.3.2 Moving the speed monitor to Church Road that is now fully recharged and functioning again and will be moved on a more regular basis.

6.3.3 The annual trim of all the perimeter cemetery hedges has taken place.

6.3.4 Strimming of the grass around the village bridges, telephone boxes and village signs

6.3.5 Carried out further edging and weeding to the Remembrance Garden, in the cemetery and cut back the yew trees and heather bushes.

LH asked Parishioners that if they had noted any other jobs around the Parish that the handyman might be able to undertake to contact the Parish Clerk.

6.4 Police Report

LH reported that she attended the Police and Crime Commissioners for West Norfolk on-line meeting held on 22nd September noting that a presentation was given of police matters in the borough. LH noted that the key points mentioned were the decrease of burglaries, both personal and business-wise, that night time violence in both King's Lynn and Downham Market had dropped off due to Coronavirus and that the Police were dealing increasingly with a trend of high levels of vulnerable people going missing, that has become a concern both nationally and in Norfolk.

The Parish Clerk reported that he had received the monthly local Police Engagement Officer's (PEO) Community news. The Parish Clerk noted that the PEO had reported that during the period of lockdown, he had been unable to run his usual drop-in sessions across the area or carry out any face to face SNAP Meetings. The PEO noted that as it appears that Covid-19 and the restrictions on our lives appear to be staying in place for the time being, the Police have decided to run online polls using the social media platforms of Twitter and Nextdoor. The PEO asks people to cast their vote about the issue effecting our area requiring police attention and helping to prioritise policing in the area. The Parish Clerk also noted the PEO reported the following *"that throughout August and into September officers across the Downham Market Beat area have been extremely proactive during their tours. Officers have been seizing uninsured vehicles and reporting the drivers for motoring offences. The rural team have been out and about conducting patrols for illegal hare coursers. Our local Inspector and local Beat manager have also been proactive and dealt with a male in Downham Market for possession of cannabis whilst they were on foot patrol in the town. Our Moonshot Team along with Team 1 from Downham Market arrested a person for drugs and weapon offences when they conducted a warrant."*

6.5 Glazewing Report

A Parishioner reported that Glazewing vehicles were still seen travelling in Church Road. KG confirmed that he had stopped two vehicles travelling along Bath Road from the A134. KG added that one driver had acknowledged that his sat nav had directed him from A134 along Bath Road. LH requested that the Parish Clerk contact Glazewing to note drivers still needed to be advised of local routes. A Parishioner noted that the 7.5 tonne restriction signs in place were positioned in an unhelpful position where drivers were unable to see them, until they were already committed to driving down Lime Kiln or Bath Roads.

6.6 Village Hall Report

ND reported that the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) has continued to meet recognising social distancing. ND noted that a deep clean had taken place and necessary items were being put in place in preparation for the Hall to re-open. ND added that VHMC had been looking at providing

screens, various handwashers, sanitizers and will attempt to put these in place as soon as possible. ND commented that the hall front doors had been ordered following a payment received from the insurers and the hope is to replace them in late October. ND noted that the Treasurer had provided a report with the following financial details: Reserve Account balance of £1,757.09 as at 8th September 2020. Payments received and banked for the period of 7th to 17th September of £3,019.52; Expenditure from 1st to 28th September of £1,065.76; This covered window cleaning, the commissioning of a glass washer, a deep clean, standing orders and direct debits for water and electricity. The Current account balance is £8,719.42. The Treasurers report also noted thanks to Sue Pepper who has stood down from the VHMC.

LH commented that when the Village Hall is able to re-open and everything is safe that then there will be an opportunity to try and arrange an annual meeting.

7. Finance Report

7.1 Accounts for September 2020 – Payments

7.1.1 Cash Flow Book September 2020 – The Parish Clerk noted that he had distributed copies of the Cash Flow to those on-line before the meeting. The Parish Clerk reported income of £150.48 received in respect of bank interest of £0.48 and £150.00 for a memorial stone to be placed in the Cemetery. The Parish Clerk reported that the September expenditure aggregated to a total of £1,762.53.

7.1.2 Cheque Payments for Approval from September 2020 – The Parish Clerk itemised the payments that were now due.

| Payee | Cheque No | Net | VAT | Gross | Remarks |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------|------------------|---|
| Norfolk Association of Local Councils | 101182 | £25.00 | £5.00 | £30.00 | Clerk's training – July 2020 |
| Holly Landscapes | 101183 | £487.50 | £97.50 | £585.00 | Ground Maintenance - August 2020 |
| R Poole | 101184 | £242.61 | £0.00 | £242.61 | Handyman September pay, purchase, mileage & allowance |
| P. King (Parish Clerk) | 101185 | £784.59 | £0.00 | £784.59 | Staff salary & expenses Sept20 & backpay |
| HMRC | 101186 | £5.24 | £0.00 | £5.24 | PAYE/NIC Clerk's salary Sept20 & backpay |
| Information Commissioner | 101187 | £40.00 | £0.00 | £40.00 | Data Protection annual subscription 2020/21 |
| Allotment Holder | 100008 | £50.00 | £0.00 | £50.00 | Returned Allotment Deposit |
| Anglian Water | 100004 | £25.09 | £0.00 | £25.09 | Quarterly Water Bill for Cemetery standpipe |
| | | | | | |
| Total | | £1,660.03 | £102.50 | £1,762.53 | |

7.1.3 LH asked Councillors present and on-line if they were content with the September payments. All Councillors noted that they were content. LH stated that the cheques and control processes would be signed off as soon as possible.

7.2 Setting of the Precept for the Financial Year 2021/22

The Parish Clerk reported that he had started to work on the projected income and expenditure for the current financial year to help Parish Councillors with the setting of the budget for 2021/22. LH stated that the Parish Council welcomes everybody to get involved with the precept process by making comments about anything that they feel the Parish Council should stop providing, increasing a provision of something or bring forward any new ideas. LH added that these can then be considered when Parish Councillors look to set the Precept in December 2020.

7.3 LH noted that the Parish Council was unsure whether the newly appointed Parish Clerk held a printer and therefore she requested that Parish Councillors give their approval to viring £200 from

Parish Council reserves as an expenditure backup, if required. This proposal was seconded by SP and approved.

8. Proposal for the Recreation Ground, St Andrews Close (Playing Field)

LH noted that Parish Councillors were very pleased to receive a letter from a young Parishioner regarding the Recreation Ground and that together with her mother were attending the meeting to expand on their proposals.

The Parishioner proposed the idea of setting up a children's play area on the playing field, consisting of up to 6 pieces of equipment, possibly made up of 3 for young children and 3 for older children. The Parishioner continued that she felt that ideally, the area should be fenced for safety reasons and to prevent dogs from entering. The Parishioner noted that she had visited Castle Acre, where recently the Parish Council had replaced old equipment with new swings, a slide, roundabout, a climbing wall/slide and that had inspired her interest when she learnt that local people had managed to raise finance from two grant applications.

LH noted that the Parish Council had received a presentation from Mick George who had mentioned a community grant scheme. SP commented that the Parish Council should explore the proposal further. ND commented that it was an aspiration that the Parish Council should back and noted that he believed that Mick George releases funds for projects twice a year and would be worthwhile to approach. ND added that it was important to identify the most appropriate area within the playing field and also to try and approach the younger members of the village to discuss the desired equipment. KG noted that other local villages had play equipment on their playing fields. LH added that the Parish Council would need to explore the practicalities of installing and equipment. ND noted that approval would be required from the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk as the landowners. A Parishioner commented that as well as deciding where the equipment might be installed and the space that it would take up it was important to try and identifying how many youngsters might then use it to equate with the amount of money that will need to be raised. KG commented that the equipment should be in a prominent place and measures should be taken to reduce any risk of vandalism. The proposing Parishioner put forward an idea of using local facebook survey to gain the thoughts of local children's interest and ideas. Another Parishioner suggested the circulation of a leaflet with the survey that would also gain the views of parents and grandparents and suggested adding posters to the Parish noticeboards and getting enough people together to do a leaflet drop. The proposing Parishioner suggested setting a target date of the end of year for receiving back survey results and she agreed to draft a poster and survey document. Agreed the village hall and Parish Council could add something to their websites and the poster sent to the Parish Clerk for the website and noticeboards. LH suggested that Councillors should meet up with the Parishioner to discuss and consider the best position for the play area. KG noted that it was also an opportunity to review the stretch of brambles that growing along the length of the recreation ground. It was agreed to keep the proposal as a regular agenda item.

9. Approval of application for the erection of a new memorial in the Cemetery

The Parish Clerk noted that the dimensions and typeface presented by the stonemason for the memorial stone was in compliance with the West Dereham Parish Council Cemetery Regulations. Councillors gave approval for the memorial stone to be accepted.

10. To comment on planning applications currently received

The Parish Clerk confirmed that no planning applications had been received.

11. To consider Parish Council Internal Affairs and Policies

11.1 Financial Regulations

The Parish Clerk noted an update to the Regulations. LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the amended Financial Regulations. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Financial Regulations had been amended and reviewed.

11.2 Community Engagement Strategy

The Parish Clerk noted a few amendments were required. LH commented that the distribution and ownership of a newsletter needed to be resolved.

A Parishioner commented that he had previously made it known that he was able to help with the distribution of a newsletter and felt that circulation of information via deliverers was important to the village. The Parish Clerk agreed contact known Parishioners who were involved with previous newsletter distribution to ascertain if they were still willing to help.

LH commented that presumably when the village hall reopens, there will be a programme of activities to advertise that will contribute towards what was the original purpose of the newsletter. ND noted that recently that there had been no village hall information to report, but assumed that in future it will become the hall's responsibility. It was noted that the village hall would have to look into the income raised from previous advertisers and weigh up the cost of its production.

LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the amendments proposed to the Community Engagement. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Community Engagement Strategy had been amended and reviewed.

11.3 Travel & Expenses Policy

LH noted an update to the Policy. LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the amendment proposed to the Travel & Expenses Policy. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Travel & Expenses Policy had been amended and reviewed.

11.4 Statement of Internal Control

The Parish Clerk noted three necessary date updates. LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the amended Statement of Internal Control. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Statement of Internal Control had been amended and reviewed.

11.5 Business Continuity Plan Part 1

The Parish Clerk noted a number of amendments and additions to contact details within the Plan. LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the amended Business Continuity Plan Part 1. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Business Continuity Plan Part 1 had been amended and reviewed.

11.5 Business Continuity Plan Part 2

LH asked Councillors present if they were content with the Business Continuity Plan Part 2 without any amendments made. All Councillors were content. LH noted that the Business Continuity Plan Part 2 had been reviewed.

12. Correspondence

12.1 The Parish Clerk reported that he had received an email from the Secretary of West Dereham Village Trust dated 4th September 2020 regarding a necessary amendment to item 11.1 as recorded in the Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 6th August 2020.

*"I refer to the Village Trust Trustees' letter dated July 2020 sent to the Parish Council in which was stated their intention to legally transfer the car park to the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee of the Village Hall – **there has never been any intention to 'sell'**".* The Parish Clerk noted that the message added that there was a need to have sufficient funds to cover legal fees, land registry fees to cover the transfer which is not currently available.

12.2 The Parish Clerk reported that he had received a letter on 1st October 2020 from Parishioners who had requested that it was read to the Parish Council meeting, as follows:

“Dear Parish Council, I would like this letter read out at the Parish Council meeting and a response would be appreciated. The points raised are a concern to a large number of parishioners and they feel that answers to their concerns have not been addressed leading to lack of trust and conspiracy theories being voiced. 1) Is the present Village Hall Committee a legally constituted body since the previous pro-tem committee was declared as unconstitutionally formed. 2) If it is not, is it operating under the control of the Parish Council. 3) The pro-tem committee made decisions re disposal and replacement of assets was this legal. Money was spent with ne accountability as no accounts have been produced of minutes of meetings. Historically this information was available to all at the AGM. Is the Parish Council in receipt of this information and if so, will this be made available to all parishioners. Will the pro-tem committee be made accountable for all and any assets that they disposed of? 4) Any decisions made by the pro-tem committee are null and void as they were not legally constituted (advice of charity commission to Parish Council) including the repayment of the alleged debt to the Village Trust. This amount was about £30,000 and given by the Millenium Trust to purchase the car park land to the rear of the Village Hall. This amount according to the Village Trust was a loan but who were the signatories to the loan agreement. I cannot find anyone who has seen this documentation. The Village Trust maintain that it owns the car park how can this be? All these matters and others are of great concern to many people and should be looked into by the Parish Council.”

LH noted that the Parish Council had only received the letter today (Meeting day) and it will therefore consider the questions raised and request the comments of the VHMC before responding.

13. To receive further reports/items of business for the next Parish Council agenda

KG requested that the subject of the Allotments is added to the next agenda. Councillors had nothing else to report or add to the next meeting agenda.

14. Date of Next Meeting – LH noted that the next Parish Council meeting is due to be held virtually on-line on Thursday 5th November 2020 at 7.00pm.

15. Open Forum

14.1 Ian Dixon noted that there was a collection taking place across the village to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support throughout September and October and invited anybody who still wanted to make a donation by cash, to post it through his letterbox (Wanderlust, Church Road). Ian thanked everybody who had already made donations.

14.2 Andy Challen, Chair of the VHMC stated that it was working towards re-opening the hall in Covid-safe conditions and the committee are in regular correspondence to generate all the things necessary to meet the requirements and hope this can be achieved as soon as is safely possible. He added that he had advertised on the facebook page for volunteers and had received a good response and added that there was a need for someone to take on the Treasurer role as the current one planned to stand down and requested if anybody was known to have bookkeeping or accounting experience and interest to join the VHMC to get in contact.

Close of Meeting. The Chair thanked everyone joining the meeting. The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Parish Clerk: Peter King – Email: clerk@westderehamparishcouncil.uk Telephone: 01366 502110