



Minutes of Castor Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 5th November 2020 at 7.30pm utilising the ZOOM application software to hold a virtual meeting as permitted by regulations made under s78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020

namely

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

336 PRESENT: Cllr Richard Anker, William Baxter, Cllr. Neil Boyce (Chairman), Cllr. Steve Davies, Cllr, Jane Greene, Cllr. Fiona Rowlands, Cllr. David Shaw, Cllr. Becky Stewart, & Cllr. Dennis Surgeon; Officers present: John Haste, clerk; two Members of the public also in attendance.

337 APOLOGIES – None - all councillors present

338 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None declared.

339 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS – We unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8th October, 2020 - Proposed Cllr. David Shaw and seconded Cllr Fiona Rowlands. It was agreed that they be duly signed by the chairman when next we physically meet together.

340 Matters arising from the previous minutes. - None

341 OPEN FORUM – The resident stated that he had 4 questions related to the agenda and asked if he had to state those at this juncture or whether the chairman would allow him to do so as the agenda items were discussed. The chairman consented and there were no other matters raised in this open forum

342 PLANNING and associated matters

a) **Status report** - We noted the current status of Planning applications received in the current year as circulated with the agenda papers. The clerk advised that with one exception and the four new items on the agenda there were no other changes to the report presented at the previous meeting.

- i [20/01249/HHFUL](#) – 9 Old Pond Lane – Proposed garage conversion to study and store, First floor extension to form bedroom and conversion of bedroom to en suite and dressing room. Cut back roof to separate No 9 from No 10. We noted that after the conversion and the extension the property would remain a four bedroom property but with limited parking space. We have no objections to the application but feel that planning officers should be mindful of car parking in Old Pond Lane area.
- ii [20/01261/LBC](#) - Village Manor 48 Peterborough Road - . We noted the detail of this application within the conservation area and have no objections to the application provided that the conservation officer is satisfied with proposed materials and detail design.
- iii [20/01333/CTR](#) – 25 Church Hill - Yew (1) & Sycamore trees (2,3,4) remove some lower branches and raise crown. We have no objections to the tree works which in our opinion are wholly necessary.
- iv [20/01377/CTR](#) - Hanover House 17 Church Hill - Leylandii x2 (A) trim to reduce height of crown to 3m-4m tall, Hawthorn (B) reduce to a height that can be managed approximately

3m high, Cherry trees x2 (C) shaping and light maintenance pruning, Self-seeded Sycamores (D) to be felled (x2 next to drive, x6 amongst leylandii) and Leylandii x2 (E) reduce from 10m to 5m. We have no objections to these tree works

- b) **Woodlands update** - Cllr. Shaw reported that he had received a reply to the concerns over access and street lighting and whilst there was an appreciation of those concerns the issues were not considered to be of a high priority. Cllr Shaw undertook to circulate the reply to all parish councillors. A meeting is to be arranged with Scott on the site to discuss the issue with the drains and we agreed that, given the depth of knowledge of this matter, Cllr. Baxter should accompany Cllr. Shaw to that meeting
- c) **Joint Community Action Plan (JCAP)** – There was no further update on this topic which will feature again at the joint meeting with Ailsworth Parish Council in December. The resident asked if there was a tie up between the JCAP and the Wildlife recovery project. Cllr Rowlands sought to provide some assurance in that there was some symmetry between the two topics
- d) **Neighbourhood Planning (NP)** – Cllr Shaw had sought to establish some dialogue on the matter of Cadman Barns but without success to date. We noted that the NP had to be reviewed at a five year interval. We were advised that the process last time took over three years, and that the government were prepared to provide funding for the review of N P's. We also noted the potential importance of neighbourhood plans provided they had been adopted or reviewed in the last three years. We asked Cllr Shaw to produce an estimated schedule of work involved and a projected timescale for consideration at our next meeting and for discussion with Ailsworth PC at our joint meeting.
- e) **White Paper on planning reform** – our agreed response to the consultation had been submitted and communicated to our local MP. Shailesh Vara had provided a positive response and had instigated further enquires and had undertaken to provide us with further information when he received a response to his enquiries. The resident assured the meeting that he would be meeting with Shailesh Vara and pursue a similar line at his meeting

343 LAND & ALLOTMENTS:

- a) **Land Management Contract** – Cllr. Davies reported on the further negotiations with NJ Pacey which had proved inconclusive. We are of the opinion that we should obtain quotes from N J Pacey and possibly Jon Wilcockson for a proper Tree survey of all parish council land but in particular those used by members of the public. The quotes to include the methodology adopted in the survey and the qualifications of the person who would be undertaking the survey.

344 GOVERNANCE MATTERS

- a. **Annual Governance & Accountability Return** – the clerk informed us that he had received the final unqualified report of the external auditor with no matters to draw to the attention of the parish council. The statutory “Notice of Conclusion of Audit” had been published on the parish council website within the time allowed for the purpose.
- b. **Email addresses** –All parish councillors confirmed that they were capable of being contacted on the castor-pc.gov.uk email addresses. There were some concerns about the ability to respond to emails on smart phones and the clerk was asked to seek further guidance from Netwise Training Limited.
- c. **Tennis Club Grant Application.** The clerk had made available the clubs business plan and reported on the further information provided by the club. We noted the viability of the club and the positive projections within the business plan. Given the financial status of the club we feel unable to justify the use public funds to approve the grant application. We noted that the club had access to interest free loans from the Lawn Tennis association. We support the ambitions of the club and remain prepared to provide bridging finance by way of a loan should the LTA loan be insufficient for the short term needs of the club.

345 HIGHWAYS –

- d. **Meeting with James Collingridge representing City Council Officers** – The meeting took place on 29th September. James had provided a spreadsheet of the issues raised, actions taken and the current status of those issues. In particular we noted that the city council were in dialogue with the water authority to undertake further investigation to secure a permanent solution to the blocked gulleys
- e. **Speed indication device** – We are conscious of the level of concern over speeding in the village and the disregard of the speed limits. Our flashing speed sign is calibrated to an out of date 30mph which needs to be moved to the top of Loves hill which remains at 30mph speed limit. We are also of the opinion that a new sign would be more effective if that indicated the actual speed of vehicles and acknowledged those driving within the limit. We asked Cllr Anker to explore these signs further and delegated the acquisition of an appropriate sign to Cllr Anker in conjunction with the clerk and approved a budget of £3000 for the purpose.
- f. **Cllrs. Observations** – there were none reported.

346 COMMUNITY MATTERS –

- a) **Website -Village notice boards** – The chairman reported that the clerk had placed the order for three notice boards as agreed at the previous meeting and noted that these could be delivered within the next week or shortly thereafter. We therefore delegated approving the installation of the noticeboards to the chairman in conjunction with the clerk.
- b) **Remembrance Day commemoration** – We noted the request of veterans to use the Farmers Cross for this year’s commemorative event and wholeheartedly support the wishes of the veterans and wish them well for a successful event.
- c) **Allotment Lane Water Supply** – We were informed by Cllr. Baxter that on checking the meter it was not spinning which indicated that the leak had been fixed. We also noted the request of Ailsworth Parish council and authorised the clerk to provide the meter readings whilst at the same time pressing for payment in full for the consumption indicated by the meter readings of the subsidiary meter.
- d) **Langdyke Trust Rural Vision** – The Vice Chairman reported that together with Helen Daly they have made useful progress with this project and will now write up the suggested improvements to the service road to the Woodlands site. Advice has been received from Tony Cook (PECT) regarding further tree planting and they await a positive response from Nene Park Trust. Cllr. Shaw will confirm the next NPT meeting scheduled for December.
- e) **Castor & Ailsworth Village Hall Committee request to again fund the village Christmas Tree.**
We **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £180 for the purpose.
Proposed by Cllr. Neil Boyce seconded by Cllr Steve Davies

347 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE:

Paper shop – possible closure. - Cllr. Shaw reported the difficulties the paper shop will have whilst carrying out the demolition and building work on their premises. The only suggestion forthcoming was an approach to Ailsworth Parish Council about possible use of the Methodist Chapel in order to keep the shop functioning during this period

348 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –

Playground & Community Allotment - Official opening of the play area and community allotment. To be considered after Covid-19 restrictions ceased to be in place

349 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC -

We unanimously **RESOLVED** to exclude press and public to discuss the pay and other personal matters related to the clerk. – The clerk left the meeting

350 CLERKS PAY AND DUTIES

- i. We agreed to implement the national pay award agreed effective from 1st April 2020 and noted that the clerk is paid pro rata for authorised hours on the substantive LC2 scale of the National Pay Scales and is currently on spinal column point 24 of that scale.
- ii. We agreed to authorise the payment of 40 hours overtime to the clerk for the additional work involved in setting up the website and in particular transferring the Neighbourhood plan and supporting evidence documents from the joint website to our new website.
- iii. We also noted the imminent house move being undertaken by the clerk which may temporarily prevent home working by the clerk. In the event of difficulties, we would look to employ a locum clerk to provide short term cover of the clerk's duties

351 READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC – We unanimously **RESOLVED** to readmit the press and public for the remainder of the meeting.

352 There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.47pm



Clerk & RFO 6th November, 2020

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 3RD DECEMBER at 7.30pm. SUBJECT TO BEING CONFIRMED		
APPROVED BY CASTOR PARISH COUNCIL		
Signature of Chairman of approving meeting:		3RD DECEMBER, 2020