

Minutes of Castor Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 14th January, 2021 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

- 367 PRESENT:** Cllr Richard Anker, Cllr. William Baxter, Cllr. Neil Boyce (Chairman), Cllr. Steve Davies, Cllr. Jane Greene, Cllr. Fiona Rowlands, Cllr. David Shaw, & Cllr. Dennis Surgeon; Officers present: John Haste, clerk, three Members of the public also in attendance.
- 368 APOLOGIES** – none received
- 369 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – The Chairman and Councillor Baxter declared an interest in the matter on the agenda related to the Good Neighbour scheme.
- 370 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** – We unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 3rd December, 2020 -. It was agreed that they be duly signed by the chairman when next we physically meet together.
Proposed Cllr. Fiona Rowlands and seconded Cllr Dennis Surgeon.
- 371 Matters arising from the previous minutes.** - None
- 372 OPEN FORUM** –
Helen Daly requested to speak on the agenda item regarding Langdyke Trust, Wildlife Recovery Plan this was agreed by the chairman. There were no other matters raised by members of the public
- 373 MINUTES of the joint meeting with Ailsworth Parish Council** – These were agreed by the common consent of those present at that meeting. Once agreed by Ailsworth Parish Council (APC), the minutes would become an official record of that meeting. Arising from the action points in those minutes we agreed to include a climate change resolution on the agenda for our February meeting
- 374 PLANNING and associated matters**
- a) **Joint Community Action Plan (JCAP)** – John Hodder had circulated draft amendments to the JCAP following on from the joint meeting with APC. We unanimously accepted the draft changes. Once also approved by APC, John Hodder would incorporate the changes into a current document.
- b) **Neighbourhood Planning (NP)** – Cllr Shaw advised the meeting there was little to add to the already agreed action point to embark on the review of our NP. City Council Planning had reported that they would be including 53 as a housing development equivalent arising from the Woodlands care home development. We agreed that we would consider how best to use that information when we review our NP
- c) **Status report** - We noted the current status of Planning applications received in the current year. The clerk reported that there was little change from the previous report, one application had been refused and a further application appeared on our agenda for this meeting.
- d) Planning applications
- i. 20/01508/HHFUL – 3 The Limes we considered the detailed planning application by reference to the plans on the planning portal and concluded that we had no objections to the proposed extension and conservatory roof.
- ii. 19/00347 – Ferry Meadows country park – erection of Lakeside Activity centre. We considered the plans and noted the revisions to the earlier submission. In general, we support any addition to sporting facilities in the city but have reservations about the provision of an indoor amenity at an outdoor venue such as Ferry meadows. Whilst we ordinarily would not comment on a planning

application in another parish, we are concerned that the proposed development may cause an increase in visitor parking in our parish and the visual impact of the proposed high building might also conflict with the vision expressed in our neighbourhood plan

- e) **Woodlands update** - Cllr. Shaw stated that there was little to report from the previous meeting and that it is understood that some progress was being made on pavilion design. We noted that the recent heavy rainfalls had caused some flooding in the area that has become the responsibility of Country Court Care and agreed to urge that drainage issues be addressed as soon as possible to prevent a recurrence of earlier problems in the village

375 LAND & ALLOTMENTS:

- a) **Tree Survey – duty of care compliance** – We had before us two quotations and agreed to accept that of John Wilcockson a qualified arborist and former tree officer to the city council. We noted that if any tree works were to be recommended arising from the survey those would have to be carried out by another contractor.
- b) **Cricket ground** – C & A cricket club had intimated a desire to construct a new building on the site and would require the approval of the parish council. We agreed we would consider the matter again if and when firm proposals were made by the club

376 HIGHWAYS

- a) **Highways issues** raised with the city council Highways department. We noted that the only update given to James Collingridge was that the kerbs around the village green were now in the programme but a road closure notice was required and this would take 8 to 12 weeks before the works were carried out. There was no update on the other Highways issues. Given the passage of time since the site visit in the village, we agreed to escalate the remaining issues to our ward councillors and ask for their assistance in seeing a representative of highways is available to attend our next meeting
- b) **Speed Indicator Device** – Cllr. Anker updated the meeting on the enquiries he had made and the relative costs involved. He had requested a price from highways for mounting the equipment on a post and was awaiting a reply. We agreed that the matter was now urgent and **RESOLVED** to delegate to the chairman and Cllr. Anker, the authority to instruct the clerk, to purchase the equipment and arrange the installation within a budget of £3000.
- Proposed Cllr.** Boyce Seconded Cllr. Davies
- c) **Speedwatch** – we noted the interest in progressing this scheme, and the possible formation of a working party in conjunction with Ailsworth parish council. We also noted that this required training which could not be progressed whilst Covid-19 restrictions were in place and therefore agree to roll this agenda item forward to a future meeting at an appropriate time.
- d) **Parking Issues** (around start and finish school times) we agreed to raise this matter again with the headteacher. In addition, Cllr. Anker agreed to make further enquiries about the signage required if the parish council were to request a verge parking restriction order.
- e) **Observations from Councillors** – Cllr Baxter sought, and gained, the support of parish council in urging the city council to renovate the vehicle gates to Ferry Meadows. These are now in a poor state of repair and some historic significance and merit in the style and design.

377 COMMUNITY MATTERS

- a) **Allotment lane water supply** – The chairman reported that he had attended the APC meeting and that the submeter was under a collapsed cover, waterlogged and difficult to read. The meter will be taken out dried out and a new reading taken at which time APC would settle the outstanding bill if the meter reading was confirmed. Cllr Baxter recommended that APC considered a relatively low cost, above ground, remote meter reading device.
- b) **Langdyke Trust wildlife recovery project** -Cllr Rowlands reported that together with Cllr. Boyce and Helen Daly, they had met before Christmas and agreed some suggested improvements to be included in the project. We were told that Castor was to be at the forefront of the Trust's programme of work. We were also informed that major parts of the project were to be put on hold as the current restrictions on movement made some elements of the scheme impractical
- c) **Good Neighbour Scheme** – We were told of growing interest in the scheme including the urban parishes of Orton Longueville and Bretton. The Trustees of the scheme have also proposed an affiliation levy, applicable to fund the scheme from year two onwards, of £2 per household and that this had budget implications for us. We **RESOLVED** to agree the levy and to make provision in the budget being considered later in this meeting.

Proposed Cllr. Fiona Rowlands seconded Cllr David Shaw.

- d) **Mobile Vendor** - We had been asked for observations on preferred locations within the parish for a visit in alternative months for the purpose of selling food. We concluded that we lacked information on which to make a judgement and asked the clerk to establish more detail of the type of food and more detail about the proposal,

378 GOVERNANCE MATTERS

a) Grant applications

- i. **CAMSAR** - Cambridgeshire search & rescue organisation requested a grant of £200 to fund night training. We were informed that the organisation had been called on for assistance in Castor during 2020. We **RESOLVED**, on this occasion, to give a one-off grant of £200 for the night training as requested

Proposed Cllr. Boyce - Seconded Cllr. Anker

- ii. **MAGPAS** air ambulance. The organisation has approached parish councils requesting assistance with funding for a range of different aspects of their operation. For our part we **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £200 to fund a supply of Morphine as this is not carried by land ambulance crews.

Proposed Cllr. Fiona Rowlands Seconded Cllr. Jane Greene

- iii. **Remote learning Tablets for Vulnerable children** – Noting that the schools are closed, the local school is providing support to children through remote lessons, which are also serving the need to combat the damaging effects of isolation on vulnerable children. Cllr. Davies brought to our attention that there is an urgent local need for approximately 30 tablets to ensure inclusion of children at the primary school unable to access the remote learning programme.

We were informed that only Five tablets were being made available by the education authority and that the head teacher was making an appeal to parents and other sources through both CASPRA and Friends of the School. Some of those children affected will be Castor residents and we are minded to provide some support. We were informed that Ailsworth Parish council were considering making £900 available to Friends of the School and at least one other parish council were of a like mind.

The clerk advised us of the legal restrictions and our inability to provide direct assistance to the school, but the ability to exercise our discretion under the General Power of Competence to assist vulnerable children with the help of CASPRA or Friends of the School. We therefore **RESOLVED** to delegate to the Chair and Cllr. Mrs Greene, the approval of release of a grant of £1100 to Friends of the school, subject to Ailsworth confirming the provision of £900 and assistance by the PTA or “Friends of the school” themselves.

Proposed Cllr. Neil Boyce seconded Cllr. Wm. Baxter

- iv. **Mobile Phone** – for the exclusive use of the parish council and to provide a permanent telephone number to be publicised on the website and all stationery. Following the house move by the clerk all telephone communications were being directed to his personal mobile which is not satisfactory in the long term. We **RESOLVED** to budget for the provision of a mobile phone dedicated for use on parish council business.

Proposed Cllr Neil Boyce Seconded Cllr. Dennis Surgeon

- v. **Receipts and payments since previous report.** We noted the report, attached to these minutes. showing receipts to 31st December of £37,068.84 and payments of £22654.56
- vi. **Bank reconciliation** as at 31st December 2020 We noted receipt of the Bank reconciliation as at 31st December
- vii. **Budgetary Control report** for the current financial year – The clerk provided an extensive report showing that whereas we budgeted to take £19,697 FROM reserves, the anticipated outcome was to add approximately £5000 TO reserves, a variance in the current year of about £25,000. Contributory factors included providing for a village hall grant which did not materialise, The VAT claim being taken into account in the previous year, and reduced Land management costs
- viii. **Budget for 2021/22 and subsequent years to 2023/24, including the precept notification to Peterborough City Council.** We considered at length the Draft budget prepared by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer and added an additional £1000 for the Neighbourhood Plan review. We also felt it prudent to provide £5000 for climate change (project detail to be considered at a future meeting) and £6000 for the costs attributable to the Langdyke trust wildlife recovery project.

We noted that the city council estimated £363.82 to be raised by £1 charge at band D on Castor residents. Having regard to the current level of reserves and the changes referred to above we agreed to aim to restore the reserves to the level anticipated when we set the budget for this financial year. We therefore **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £58,740 payments, estimated receipts of £35779.42, including £29469.42 by way of Precept and to use £22,960.58 from our reserves, resulting in a decrease in the precept of £7 from the current level of £88 to £81 at band D

Proposed Cllr Neil Boyce Seconded Cllr. Dennis Surgeon

379 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRESPONDENCE: None other than those matters covered elsewhere on the agenda

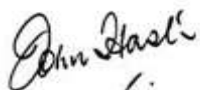
380 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –

381 Speedwatch, Highways update, Village Tribune magazine

Other matters held in abeyance for the time being:

Playground & Community Allotment - Official opening of the play area and community allotment to be considered after Covid-19 restrictions ceased to be in place. Former VE day celebrations on hold possibly to be replaced by celebrations in 2021 or even 2022 for the Queens anniversary

382 There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.43pm



Clerk & RFO 15th January, 2021

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 4TH FEBRUARY 2021 at 7.30pm.		
APPROVED BY CASTOR PARISH COUNCIL		
Signature of Chairman of approving meeting:		4TH FEBRUARY 2021

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