



Castlethorpe Parish Council

Minutes of a Parish Council General Meeting held remotely by video conference on 1st June 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Merritt, Ayles, Forgham, Sawbridge, Hinds, Keane, Markham (by phone) Ward Cllrs Bowyer and the Clerk. Unfortunately, due to technical problems no members of the public could view the meeting via Facebook.

Public session: Cllr Ayles had received a phone call informing that the road at Thrupp Wharf near the Navigation pub had been marked for repair by Northants CC.

- | | | ACTION |
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| 1 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 1.1 | None | |
| 2 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | |
| 2.1. | Cllr Forgham pecuniary interest 8.1. | |
| 3 | APPROVE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING | |
| 3.1 | Previous minutes from the meeting of 4 th May were proposed by Cllr Keane seconded by Cllr Sawbridge and agreed unanimously. | |
| | TO RECEIVE REPORTS | |
| 4.1. | Clerks Report & Review of Actions (See Appendix A1) – matters arising: | |
| 4.1.1. | Item 1 – there was some discussion about whether to postpone the next scheduled grass cut given the hot weather and lack of growth. It was agreed to leave the schedule as is with the changes agreed in August. | |
| 4.1.2. | Item 3 – Cllr Markham suggested that the parish council should have the entire churchyard area cut back. Cllr Ayles responded that this is the responsibility of the church and re-emphasised that the parish council wanted the trees by the war memorial cut back only so there would be no chlorophyll dropping on the war memorial when we get it cleaned. | |
| 4.1.3. | Item 6 Cllr Ayles asked Cllr Bowyer to talk to MKC about whether any government grants are available for loss of income to parish councils. | Cllr Bowyer |
| 4.1.4. | Item 13 – Neither Cllr. Keane or Merritt had heard from MKC about plans to improve Sustrans cycle tracks. Cllr Ayles said that it is important that there should be attention to rural areas. Cllr Keane will raise at the Transport Forum of which he is a member. | Cllr Keane |
| 4.1.5. | Item 14 – although Cllr Ayles had a record of a higher amount outstanding it was agreed that in the spirit of the earlier resolution that the parish council should only pay up to £1559 for the goalposts requested by the Sports Association (CSA) subject to approval to fund from outstanding s.106 planning gain. Clerk to liaise with CSA and also to confirm what is the outstanding balance for s.106 allocations. | Clerk |
| 4.1.6. | Item 15 – Cllr Ayles said that a public footpath sign had been reported as having fallen over outside the village but within the parish boundary, making 3 signs that need attention. Cllr Ayles had found some 2 sided signs but these were 5 times the cost of buying 2 x 1 sided signs and joining them together. It was agreed that in view of the difference between costs that the Clerk purchase just 2 of the single sided signs for the moment and arrange to join them with Cllr Markham and the handyman. The handyman will fix the loose and fallen signs. Clerk will buy further signs if successful | Clerk/Cllr Markham |
| 4.1.7. | Cllr Ayles will talk to MKC about what are the options to engage a contractor to re-paint the lamp posts. | Cllr Ayles |
| 4.2. | Neighbourhood Plan update | |
| 4.2.1. | Cllr Ayles reported that at the time of the last meeting no Neighbourhood Plans were being progressed. In the meantime, small amendments have been made at the behest of MKC and a final draft submitted to them. The Government has now given the go ahead to resume NP activity and MKC had announced that the Regulation 16 public consultation will take place between 22 nd May and 17 th July. | |
| 5 | TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS (previously viewed on line by Cllrs) | |
| 5.1. | 20/01075/FULMMA Variation of condition 1 (Approved Drawings) attached to planning permission 18/01294/FUL to amend the western elevations, and provide details of the parking layout and cycle store Lodge Farm Business Centre Wolverton Road Castlethorpe no objections | |

- 5.2. **20/01168/TPO** Horse Chestnut tree in our garden requires 20% reduction to retain integrity Castlethorpe Lodge Hanslope Road Castlethorpe – **no objections**
- 5.3. **20/01182/FUL** Single storey orangery to the rear of the property Castle House 5 North Street Castlethorpe – it was agreed that as the orangery can be seen from the public footpath the parish council should request a condition to ensure that the walls and windows be built to the same style and using the same materials as the existing building. This was agreed by a majority (1 abstention). It was further agreed that the development should comply with the recommendations of the MKC conservation officer.
- 5.4. **20/01183/LBC** Listed Building Consent for single storey orangery to the rear of the property Castle House 5 North Street Castlethorpe – **no objections as per 5.3.**

6 TO RECEIVE REPORT BACK ON PREVIOUS PLANNING APPLICATION

- 6.1. **19/02444/REM** - Reserved matters application for the erection of 31 dwellings, to include matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for which approval is being sought. Land To The East of Maltings Field. **Appealed on grounds of non-determination. Awaiting allocation of a Planning Inspector – no update this month**

7 TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS

- 7.1. Cllr Ayles and the Clerk had agreed the financial duties to be outsourced and advice had been sought from BALC as to whether they could be fulfilled (at an agreed rate) by an individual without the need to employ them. BALC had responded that they needed more time to assess. Cllr Ayles presented 3 options:
- To employ someone. The Clerk was not happy with this option as it would introduce significant overhead
 - To advertise the work without employing the person (subject to BALC advice)
 - To request that another (bigger) council take on the work
- It was agreed that Cllr Ayles and the Clerk agree the best option subject to BALC advice.

Cllr Ayles/Clerk

- 7.2. Neil Humphries representing the CSA was invited to join the meeting (by video link) by the Chair
- 7.2. The groundsman had identified a battery-operated heavy-duty strimmer to use round the village. Cllr Markham said that battery strimmers were not fit for purpose to which there was a majority agreement. The Chair suspended the meeting for Mr Humphreys to contribute:

The CSA would be happy for the strimmer currently used by the sports ground groundsman to be kept by the handyman and for the groundsman to collect it when needed. This was agreed unanimously. Clerk to talk to handyman and CSA.

Clerk

- 7.3. Mr Humphries reported that the CSA are now back in dialogue with previous users of the tennis courts and had at this time 15 households who expressed a desire to renew. He intended to change the current padlocked entry system with a combination lock that he would notify to paid members only.
- He asked the parish council whether they would have any problem with the courts re-opening following government approval and would get the conditions of use from another tennis club and display them at the courts. It was agreed that this is satisfactory.

He then went on to present further options for the courts to either improve them for current users or to upgrade the courts to a new 4th generation all-purpose surface that could accommodate many different sports.

Cllr Ayles suggested that for the next meeting Mr Humphries should first identify the work that is required to make the tennis courts fit for existing tennis users only and also look at options to upgrade the courts to a new service to include what grants are available. Mr Humphries will liaise with Clerk & Cllr Merritt before next meeting.

Clerk

- 7.4. It was unanimously agreed to request MKC to appoint Mr Andrew Ashcroft as Examiner for the Neighbourhood Plan or, if he is not available, to delegate the appointment of an alternate to the NP Steering Group.

8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 8.1. Cllr Forgham withdrew for meeting
- It was pointed out that a refund of £77.98 + VAT to Cllr Forgham for hand sanitisers for the Village Hall was not on the RFO payments schedule that had been posted for the meeting.
- The payment schedule was proposed by Cllr Hinds seconded Cllr Sawbridge and was approved unanimously with this one addition. Cllr Forgham returned to the meeting.

Payee	Description	Invoice	Amount
S Bradbury	Salary May 2020	per pay slip	£624.62
Stacey Blease	VH Cleaning May	per attached invoice	
RTM	Landscaping April	attached invoice 2241	£391.67
RTM	Additional cut MAY	attached invoice 2265	£375.00
Simon Bates	Cleaning of all village entrance gates and all street/highway signage	attached invoice	£380.00
Simon Bates		attached invoice 171	£400.00
Richard Wontner	Village maintenance	attached invoice 90	£60.00
Richard Wontner	Empty bins	attached invoice 90	£50.00
Richard Wontner	Village Hall maintenance	attached invoice 90	£20.00
TOTAL			£2,301.29
Direct Debits			
IDNET	16263.00		
Google Ireland	26107096G05ASYDKH7		£28.99
XLN	4976199 16674975		£33.17
EON	089208742670A		£102.00
EDF	671070653836.00		£84.00
Everflow	B220925A		

- 8.2. The Clerk estimated that the parish council is losing c. £750 per month on being unable to hire out the Village Hall. Given a corresponding reduction in cost of utilities through non-usage he calculated that the net loss would be in the region of £500 per month. Government had encouraged local Authorities to give grants in certain circumstances but the Clerk had been unable to find any grant for which we are eligible to apply. Cllr Ayles & Clerk to look further. Clerk/Cllr Ayles
- 8.3. The amount of money requested from MKC to repay costs on village improvements exceeded the allocated amount for the 'public works' line of the s.106 planning gain. Cllr Ayles suggested that the cost of the litter bins be recovered from the 'waste receptacles' allocation. The Clerk thought that this category was intended for central costs but would ask. Clerk
- 8.4. Annual Return (AGAR) for external auditor will be presented at meeting on 6th July Clerk
- 9 **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (email circulated prior to meeting)**
- 9.1. An email has been received refuting the decision by MKC not to allow the felling of a sycamore tree at the Thatched Barn Hanslope Road application 20/00389/TCA. The Clerk and Cllr Ayles had discussed whether this should be considered by the parish council as a planning matter and had agreed that it should not. Agreed. The email was noted.
- 10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for noting, or for inclusion on a future agenda)**
- 10.1. Cllr Markham asked why the meeting was not being broadcast to the public. Cllr Forgham responded that there have been technical problems that will be sorted out for next meeting
- 10.2. Cllr Markham referred back to issues that he had raised in previous meetings about the Neighbourhood Plan and land allocations. The Chair reminded him that all matters have been resolved and there is nothing further to discuss.
- 10.3. A question was asked about the Annual Parish meeting. The Chair responded that the government had decreed that there is no need to hold one until 2021.
- 10.4. Cllr Keane asked whether there would be an August meeting this year. Cllr Ayles replied that there would probably not be unless something urgent arose.
- 11 **TO AGREE DATE AND ATTENDANCE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS/EVENTS**
- 11.1. Next General Parish Council meeting will be on Monday 6th July 2020 and will be conducted by video-conference.

There being no more business the meeting closed at 21.30

Appendix A - Schedule of Reports & File Notes

APPENDIX A1 – CLERK’S REPORT 1/6/2020

1. Request sent to RTM to re-schedule cuts in August, September, October to reduce number of cuts by one as decided at last meeting
2. Request for second weed kill of village in mid-June. Village gates and signs have been cleaned.
3. Clerk has asked Luke Stacey to cut back trees around war memorial. Luke has agreed to do the work but needs Fr. Garry’s permission which has been requested. No answer as yet.
4. Paths have been re-cut in wildlife area. Work on replacement of the mower’s cylinders to be put back to end of growing season. Mower has been serviced and seems to be running OK.
5. CSA has been successful in its application for grant to meet running costs at sports ground whilst no subscriptions being paid.
6. Clerk was unable to apply for the advertised grant to compensate for loss of earnings from Village Hall hire as applications were only allowed from entities in the Bucks CC catchment. Alternative grants to be sought.
7. Work at sports ground to be scheduled when tradesman recommences work following lifting of lockdown: securing doors at football pavilion, replace pavestone at cricket pavilion and planting trees donated by local resident. Trees have been selected and await at Emberton nursery. **Have been unable to contact Nursery or tradesman**
8. Pointing beneath the bell tower at the Village Hall and movement of clock still to be done. **Have been unable to contact tradesman**
9. Milton Keynes Partnership Foundation are getting grant monies in place before defibrillators for Village Hall and sports ground can be ordered. Cllr Merritt and Clerk then to commission purchase of agreed units plus arrange installation and training with First Responder.
10. No update received yet from Chris Hayles at MKC looking at opportunity to provide additional heritage lighting when MKC replace street lamps with LED lights.
11. Still no response from Richard Woodcock at MKC about replacing street signs with traditional name plates.
12. Drawdown request has been sent to Paul Van Geet at MKC to re-claim expenses for village improvements from s.106 allocation.
13. MKC to provide Cllrs Keane/Merritt with the list of agreed responsibilities for the Sustrans cycle network – **current status unknown**
14. Previous resolution to purchase goalposts for football club determined that the money should come from s.106 playing facilities which has an outstanding amount of £1559. Quote received from football club was priced at £2812. **Parish Council to determine whether to increase spend limit.**
15. Three village public footpath signposts need attention. Handyman will re-concrete post by war memorial into Castle Field. That sign plus two others at the Village Hall and railway bridge are faded. On looking for signs on line I was only able to find single sided aluminium signs 3mm thick. **Advice required whether to buy left and right signs and glue together or use single sided.**
16. Proceedings for our claim of damage to the village hall floor have been postponed until a live court hearing can be scheduled which will probably not be before the Autumn.
17. Of the 72 lamp posts in the village only 29 were considered not to be in need of re-painting. Parish Council to consider whether to consider major re-painting exercise.
18. Clerk has provided feedback to Proludic as required. Company now need to refund £1,000 as agreed. Clerk has contacted account manager who has said she will chase up.

No progress/unknown status on outstanding actions:

- CCLA fund application is on hold due to new applications not being accepted at present. Need to review situation in light of financial position brought about by lockdown.
- Clerk to purchase Balmoral style bench for south end of North Street.
- Cllr Ayles & Geary to consider MKC decision not to sell land at the side of 6 The Chestnuts
- Clerk has contacted the Account Manager but Proludic have still not made the £1000 refund to us –. Assets to be added to Insurance and Asset List – carried forward
- CCTV at Sports Ground – clerk to contact suppliers to understand the management overheads. No progress this month
- Clerk to register The Fishponds Play Area with Land Registry
- Clerk to make ‘rights of way’ application for the strip of land between Station Road and Fishponds
- Cllr Ayles has had no response on PSPO Dogs but was not expecting one yet as MKC have not made Order. Previous decision was just to consult

Steve Bradbury 1/6/2020