

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 6th December 2021

- Present: Councillors: Richard Edmondson (Chair), Peter Holborn (Vice Chair), Janet Elnaugh, Emily Elnaugh, Tim Moss, Paul Selvey and Penny Otton. Clerk: Jane Hill, and eight members of the public.
1. All Councillors were present hence no apologies for absence.
 2. There were no declarations and interests raised on request from Chair.
 3. Resolved: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st November 2021 were agreed as a true record.
 4. The Chair notified the Council of the resignation of Cllr Slattery. The Chair expressed his gratitude, on behalf of the Council, for Cllr Slattery's service and highlighted her valuable work to update the Parish Council website. The vacancy on the Council was notified to the returning officer at Mid Suffolk Council, a vacancy notification was issued and posted on the village notice board from 1st to 15th December 2021. It has been confirmed no election is needed and the Council can co-opt a new Councillor. The Chair advertised the vacancy via the local e-mail service.
 5. Update on 5 year plan project implementation.
 - i) White Gates at the entrance to the village – Cllr Selvey
 - o Cllr Selvey contacted the Highways department who explained it is no longer possible to install wooden gates at the entrance to a village. Any new gates must be plastic and the installation should be managed by Highways. The budget for each gate is approx. £500-600.
 - o Cllr Otton asked for a detailed breakdown of costs, including installation, if the Parish Council want to apply for a grant.
 - o Next steps, Cllr Selvey to obtain a detailed budget, following this the Council can decide how to proceed.
 - o It was also noted that installing plastic gates may not in keeping with a sustainable environmental agenda and Cllr Selvey to seek further information on materials options.
 - ii) Benches on footpaths – Cllr Moss
 - o Cllr Moss is planning to order the wood next year closer to the installation date of the benches.
 - o There has already been offers of support to install the benches and Cllr Moss plans to send a JD post to ask if any other members of the Parish would like to be involved.
 - iii) Installation of the football nets – Cllr Moss and Cllr Selvey
 - o The football nets, clips, and pegs have been ordered. The clips and pegs have arrived, the nets are expected to be delivered on 17th December 21, two volunteers have offered to install the new nets once they arrive.
 - o It was confirmed that painting the goal posts is planned for next year once the weather improves.
 - iv) Queen's Canopy – Cllr Holborn
 - o To implement this project, Cllr Holborn has proposed planting 70 trees in the village to form a community wood. At a previous meeting, it was suggested the trees could be planted on part of the land next to the Rattlesden Road allotments.
 - o Cllr Edmondson stated that the Trustees of the Allotment Charity had met to discuss the use of this land, the Trustees concluded they do not support planting trees because it would mean a permanent change of use from grazing land. Furthermore, it was stated that it would prevent the annual rent (£65 per annum) from being collected. In the past the rent offset the allotment holders rent, it was highlighted that this loss of revenue would result in the allotment rents rising by £5 per year which the Trustees felt was not acceptable.
 - o Cllr J Elnaugh felt the proposed should be revisited in the future and highlighted there is time to consider other proposals and that 70 trees would not take up the whole site.
 - o It was agreed that Cllr Holborn would assess how much of the land would be taken up by 70 trees and also consider other places in the village where they could be planted, for example the Cricket.
 - v) There was no public comment when invited by the Chair.
 6. To receive any report from District and County Council Ward Member and Portfolio Holders or other agencies and to take action as appropriate.

Signed Richard Emmerson

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- i) Cllr Penny Otton District and Council Ward Member
 - o Cllr Otton requested that the Council review the draft local plan, comment on the consultation regarding HGV routes, and publicise the trees for life programme.
 - o It was highlighted that an amendment to the Highway code had been passed. All speed limits are now obligatory and will have to be enforced (including 20mph).
 - o At the time of the meeting there was limited information regarding the response to the new Covid variant.
 - ii) Cllr Peter Holborn Neighbourhood Plan Officer and Tree Warden
 - o Cllr Holborn outlined the excellent progress regarding tree and hedge planting in the village.
 - Volunteers have planted the gap in the hedge on Cora's walk with 30 shrubs.
 - Hall Farm are planting 30 hedgerow trees from the Woodland Trust.
 - The gap in the hedge on the Rattlesden Road allotment had be filled.
 - Planting in Cross Street in progress.
 - Waiting to hear from a land owner regarding further planting.
 - o It was noted that there was a leaning Cherry tree on the Cricket. The plan is to monitor whether this gets worse, if it does Cllr Holborn will take it down.
 - o It was highlighted that the PCC have made space in the church yard for wildlife, are planting wild flowers and installing an owl box.
 - iii) Cllr Tim Moss Parish Assets Officer
 - o It was confirmed that the defibrillator had been regularly checked and that the seed bank will start again in Spring.
 - o The moles on the Cricket are becoming a health and safety issue and potentially damaging the new play equipment. Next steps are for Cllr Edmondson to arrange a pest control expert to address the issue.
 - iv) Cllr Paul Selvey Highways officer
 - o It was confirmed that the grit bins have been checked and are all full.
 - o The new SID has been delivered and is in the process of being set up.
 - o Cllr Selvey has sent the speeding information from the existing SID to the Police who have stated they will deploy their own survey equipment to check the sites, however it was noted that it may not be a priority.
 - o A proposal to purchase more 30mph repeater signs was reviewed. It was proposed that these signs could be installed on existing posts to reinforce the speed limit through the village. The signs are £20 each, each post needs two signs, and there are nine posts through the village, hence a total proposed budget of £360 would be required.
 - o The Council questioned where the signs were to be posted? Is there a minimum distance between signs? and whether this is the best use of budget?
 - o The next steps are for Cllr Selvey to adjust the proposal and bring it back for a decision at the next meeting.
 - v) Cllr Edmondson Allotment Trustee
 - o See agenda point 5.4 regarding the allotment Trustee's review of the Queen's Canopy proposal.
 - o The Trustee's have discussed the future running of the charity and the allotments and a number of options were considered, including forming a trust or an allotment society. It was agreed that the charity as it stands still holds the same value as when it was established, although it was acknowledged that more can be done by the Trustees to improve communication with the tenants.
 - o It was requested that Clerk book a meeting in village hall for end of Jan/Feb for an allotment Trustee meeting.
 - vi) There was no comment from the public when asked by Chair.
7. The Clerk's activity versus plan was submitted to Council prior to meeting, the report highlights that all planned work is complete to date.
 8. The Council considered the precept for the next financial year.

Resolved: The Council agreed the precept of £9,197 should be submitted to Mid Suffolk and they confirmed that the Chairman and Clerk may sign the Precept application form on behalf of the Council.
 9. Bank reconciliation and payments:

Signed Richard Emmerson

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1. The following payments were authorised by the Council:

	Description	£
Unity Trust	Reimburse clerk for football nets, clips, and pegs (Forza)	£104.88
Unity Trust	Balance of SALC training*	£60.00

2. The Chairman confirmed that the current account balances and reconciliation up to 29th November 2021 are correct and supported by relevant Bank Statements.

10. Two new planning applications were considered:

1. Proposal DC/21/06053: Application for Outline Planning Permission (some matters reserved, access to be considered) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Erection of 1No dwelling, garage and new vehicular access. Location: Land At, Chapel Lane, Drinkstone, Suffolk.

Cllr J Elnaugh summarised a report, circulated to the Council prior to the meeting. The report contained a review of the planning application considered against the policies outlined in the Drinkstone Neighbourhood Plan and NPPF. The report concluded that the Council should object to the proposed planning application for the following reasons:

- The application does not comply with the Drinkstone Neighbourhood Plan policies, DRN3 - Housing Allocations, DRN5 – Protection of Important Views and Rural and Landscape Character, DRN8 – Local Green Spaces, DRN9 – Biodiversity, DRN11 - Heritage Assets, and DRN12 - Design Considerations.
- There is a conflict of opinion regarding boundaries, notably with Elm Tree Cottage and Gedding Road allotments supported by Land registry documentation and property deeds.
- Confirmation from the Senior Highway Records Data Technician Technical Services, Infrastructure Management stating the 'confirmed highway boundary' on Drawing Number 092/2021/02 rev P2, was not drawn by Suffolk County Council. If the existing hedge is on the old hedge line and not one planted more recently forward of that then the drawing may be misleading as far as the boundary is concerned.
- There are issues regarding access and safety for residents in Chapel Lane during any construction, and issues regarding ownership of Chapel Lane.
- There are issues regarding road safety on the highway – Gedding Road and the junction of Chapel Lane and Gedding Road.
- The application fails to submit a full Environmental report.
- The application fails to submit a Heritage report.
- Site notices were not displayed in a timely manner to allow residents to comment within the original timeframe.

It was highlighted that photographs should be submitted as part of the Parish Council response as the applicant's consultancy report did not capture the site accurately.

It was noted there was a site visit from Mid Suffolk planners on 25th November 2021.

On opening the meeting to public comment a member of the public, who lives next to the planned development, stated the following:

- They had not received a site notice, and that a site notice only went up last Friday, that is 3 weeks prior to the deadline.
- That no comment had been made from the heritage department on the Mid Suffolk planning portal, despite the potential development being in the proximity of two listed buildings. Furthermore the member of the public highlighted that the listing on his house was based on the grouping of the houses in the area.

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- That there was no report from the environmental agency despite the area having a medium to high flood risk. The householder highlighted he has to pay an excess premium for the heightened flood risk.
- That there was no mention in the Highways report that the road is an unadopted lane.
- That the land was not adjacent to a ditch as stated in the planning documents but next to a tributary of the Blackbourn river.

A second member of the public commented as follows:

- He endorsed all points made by the first householder, in particular the absence of a review from Heritage department must be reviewed.
- The member of the public felt that the application should be refused due to the visual splays and setting in close proximity to two listed buildings.
- It was highlighted that Appendix B of the consultancy report was incorrect and should not be used, Highways have stated in an e-mail to the householder that the map was not sourced from them. As such it is not clear where this map came from and how a map which shows the boundaries in the incorrect place could be used. The house holder agreed to send a copy of the e-mail to the Chair.
- That the proposal to place a culvert under the road was inappropriate and should not have been recommended by the consultancy.

CLr Edmondson, who is both chair of the Parish Council and a Trustee of the Allotment Charity highlighted that the allotment holders object to the proposed planning application for the follow reasons:

- The redline on the land registry clearly shows the boundaries of the allotments and Elm Tree Cottage and that these boundaries are crossed by the planned development.
- The development would mean ripping out hedges which have been in place for a long time and belong to the allotments or Elm Trees Cottage.

The Councillors discussed the proposal and voted to object to this planning application.

2. DC/21/06242 | Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/21/04153- Condition 4 (Precautionary Biodiversity Method Statement), Condition 5 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy), Condition 6 (Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme) and Condition 7 (Agreement of Materials)

Drinkstone Hall Gedding Road Drinkstone Suffolk IP30 9TG

- The Council had no objection to this proposal.

Resolved: The Council agreed that the Clerk makes known the Council's comments on Planning Applications on this agenda to the Corporate Manager, Growth & Sustainable Planning at Mid Suffolk District Council.

11. There has been an enquiry made to the Council regarding the steel frame which been erected at the development on Rattlesden Rd. The conclusion of the Council was as follows:
 - The Council considered whether they should to write to Mid Suffolk planners to find out what this structure is.
 - At the time of the meeting it was agreed it was simply a steel frame and does not contravene any planning decisions.
 - The response from the Council depends on what this structure turns into. It was agreed that no action would be taken however the development of the structure would be monitored.
12. There was no public comment when invited by the chair
13. There were no agenda items proposed for the next meeting. The Chair thanked the Councillors for all their hard work over the year. One Councillor, on behalf of the Council also thanked the Chair for his hard work and commitment over the last year.
14. The next scheduled meeting is Monday 10th January 2022 at the village hall.
15. The meeting closed at 9.34pm.

Signed Richard Emmerson

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