

Spooner Row Community Council Meeting Minutes

Saturday 25th April 2020, 9.30 am, Video Conference

Present: Julian Halls (Chair) Martyn Lemon
Stephen Ward (RFO) Robert Foster
Susan Hewitson Tony Cleary
Janice Dore – Clerk
Colin Foulger - County Councillor, Chair of planning for County and Chairman of NDR working group attended for first hour and 20 minutes.

Members of the public – Karl Chapman and Gareth Melton

Due to Corona Virus and the resultant Government direction on social distancing it was not possible for the Community Council to meet in person. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) Regulation 2020 No.392, which came in to force on 4 April 2020, has legislated for remote attendance at Council meetings through electronic, digital, virtual locations and telephone conferencing. Therefore, attendance at his Council meeting for all councillors and any members of the public was through the Zoom video conferencing application. The Agenda was therefore restricted to essential, urgent, and important matters only.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies from Neil Griffin.

2. **Declarations of interest & Dispensations**

Clr Julian Halls would step aside from taking part in planning items because he is on the South Norfolk planning committee as a district councillor.

Clr Sue Hewitson declared an interest as a neighbour in item 5b.

Clr Martyn Lemon is Chair of Governors for Spooner Row Primary School.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held 27 February 2020.** Clr R Foster did not accept the Minutes reflected a true record of the meeting (rejecting Clr Foulger Brief Report [Highway Matters]). Councillors endorsed the recorded Minutes; Clr S Ward abstained as he was not present at the February meeting. **Minutes were agreed and will be signed as a true record of proceedings when this is possible. Until signed they are not considered official.**

4. **Opportunity for Public participation.** The two members of the public were happy to listen and had no comments at this stage.

Planning

Clr Martyn Lemon took the chair.

- 5.
- a) Planning Application 2020/0727 Trusthorpe Sutton Street Sutton NR18 JJ. Discussed and considered. **It was agreed that that there were no objections. Clerk to respond.**
 - b) Planning Application 2020/0744 2 Jubilee Cottages Wattlefield Road Wattlefield Norfolk NR18 9JY. Discussed the fact that it appears work had already started before application submitted. Considered reasonable. **It was agreed that that there were no objections. Clerk to respond.**
6. Discussed the communications with KCS Developments, an agent for two local landowners wanting to develop their land. The Village Growth Framework and Vision document that was forwarded to the Council by KCS Development for consideration was published in 2016, so it was therefore agreed that the document was too old to be relevant to comment on. Councillors discussed that they would like to understand the current plans from the developers and that it was important to understand what the community may want. It was therefore considered important that the residents survey is actioned (item 23). **It was agreed to write to KCS Developments to request visibility of the land owners more recent development plans. ML to write to KCS Development.**

Clr Julian Halls retook the chair

Finance - SW

7. Payments endorsed by the Chairman and Clr Stephen Ward (RFO) since the last Committee meeting on 27th February and already paid were briefed to the Council. These payments were authorised out of committee due to the cancellation of 26th March 2020 Council Meeting, as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. All Councillors were informed by the Chairman and the RFO, in a Zoom conference call on 25th March, of the intent to take these payments before they were brought to full Council for approval:
- a. Salaries for March 2020: **£193.57** paid on 30th March 2020.
 - b. Clr Robert Foster – Dog bin fixing straps: **£14.99** set up for electronic payment but awaiting authorisation.
 - c. Ward Gethin Archer Solicitors – Land transfer and legal fees for transfer of Playing Field from Wymondham Town Council: **£263.00** paid on 30th March 2020.
 - d. Clr Stephen Ward – Postage for Sutton noticeboard planning application: **£1.72** paid on 24th March 2020.
 - e. Clr Martyn Lemon – Payment for website volunteer's meal at The Boars: **£96.95** paid on 3rd April 2020.
 - f. HMRC - PAYE: **£160.40** paid on 14th April.

It was agreed that payments were warranted and were approved retrospectively.

8. The RFO presented the following to the Council for payment:
- a. Donation to Acorns: **£300.00**
 - b. Salaries for April 2020: **£292.74**
 - c. Cllr Stephen Ward – Credit applied to virtual telephone account: **£10.00**
 - d. Cllr Stephen Ward – Purchase from ReQuestaPlan of scale location plan for the Sutton noticeboard planning application: **£13.20**
 - e. Cllr Robert Foster – Printing by Premier Print of A5 Council Coronavirus help leaflets - **£40.00**
 - f. Mr R Goreham – Internal audit fee: **£65.00**

All payments approved.

9. The RFO presented the FY19/20 Q4 Financial Statement as signed off 16th April 2020. **Agreed and approved**
10. The RFO presented a proposal to amend the FY20/21 Budget. Cllr R Foster pointed out the need to be using CIL money on projects. Dog bins at £450 were in this year's budget and would be recorded on our FY20/21 CIL return to South Norfolk Council. However, the Sutton noticeboard would be in next year's CIL return. **Agreed and approved.**
11. The RFO presented the FY19/20 Internal Audit Report, including Pg.3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR). **Chair thanked Cllr S Ward for all his hard work.**
12. The RFO presented Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement: Pg.4 of the AGAR for approval. **Agreed and approved; this document was signed by the Chairman post the Zoom Meeting.**
13. The RFO presented Section 2 – Accounting Statements: Pg.5 of the AGAR for approval. **Cllr R Foster proposed, and Cllr M Lemon seconded the motion to approve: this document was signed by the Chairman post the Zoom meeting.**
- The RFO went on to propose that in order to ensure that the Council moves its consideration of risk on to a more robust footing that analysis of Risk should be considered as a standing agenda item every 6 months; this would be administered by the RFO. **All Agreed.**
14. The RFO presented the timeline for Exercising Public Rights. **Agreed to follow normal timeline of publishing accounts by 1st July 2020, but to monitor COVID-19 restrictions with the option to delay the Exercising of Public Rights and the physical inspection of the account documents until September 2020 if required; September deadline has been agreed by a legislation change for 2020 only. All agreed.**
15. The RFO presented Version 1.0 of the Finance, Banking & Asset Mandate and endorsement. Cllr M Lemon and Cllr J Halls expressed concerns around the previously agreed position of having a Deputy RFO who was also a signatory on cheques or an authoriser of electronic payments. The RFO explained that the bank set up does not allow the person requesting and the one approving to be the same person. The RFO pointed out that there is no increased risk from appointing a Deputy RFO due to the constraints on the role and the process laid down in the Banking Mandate. **Version 1 of the Finance, Banking and Asset Mandate was endorsed with 5 for and 1 against.**

Post the vote the RFO offered Cllr M Lemon the option to propose an amendment to the Version 1 of the Finance, Banking and Asset Mandate, with reference to his analysis of where he believed there was increased risk in the appointment of a Deputy RFO.

Playing Field.

16. Cllr M Lemon updated the Council on playing field maintenance. Norse, the contractor who was chosen as the preferred contractor by the Council in November 2019 has now informed the Council that they will not now take up the contract as they had reconfigured their business to focus within Norwich. Cllr M Lemon reported that it was proving difficult to find a replacement contractor during COVID-19 to cut the grass. Greenscape, a local contractor, are willing to cut the grass and hedges but the Council was still awaiting their quote. Wymondham council could not provide assistance as they are also struggling to get work done. In terms of hedge maintenance, due to Norse dropping out, the Council had now missed the window for hedging work to be undertaken as DEFRA states that hedges cannot be cut between 1st March and 1st September. **Agreed that Cllr M Lemon would send the Greenscape quote to all when in, but cost comparison between at least 2 companies is required before agreement.**
- Concerns were raised over further delays to playing field maintenance, so it was agreed that pending a new playing field maintenance contract being signed that Cllr M Lemon was allocated a budget of £200 to get one cut of the playing field grass.**
- Concerns were also raised of Mole damage to the playing field. Treatments required so agreed Cllr M Lemon is to place on message board and to try British Mole Catchers.**
17. Cllr J Halls presented the result of the play equipment inspection. Inspection report is 11 pages. The possibility of a local working party was discussed to undertake work on the small kids play area but dismissed due to COVID-19 restrictions and the Council's liability to ensure social distancing. In addition, it was decided that to ensure longevity of repainting work undertaken for the Basketball Football area that it would be better value over the longer-term for a professional job with specialist paint. **Cllr J Halls will prepare an action plan.**

Ongoing Item

18. To consider renewal of annual subscriptions to:
- a) Norfolk PTS at a cost of £202.98. Found to be better than NALC for training particularly for clerk at this time. **Proposed Cllr S Ward Seconded Cllr J Halls. All Agreed to continue to subscribe.**
 - b) NALC at a cost of £164.54. Has been particularly good for documents support and legal support during COVID-19. **Agreed to continue to subscribe.**
19. Cllr J Halls briefed the Council that there was nothing to update on Land at: Plots 1-8 Land to the East of London Road, Sutton; the Unofficial G&T site.
20. Cllr J Halls and Cllr S Ward gave a COVID-19 Update – County and Council's response. Norfolk Resilience Forum support has been useful. As a result of the

Council leaflet 18 volunteers had come forward and we had identified 9 families self-isolating. Volunteers had assisted with prescriptions collections in the first 2 weeks, the majority of which had now been referred to South Norfolk Council for the assistance from the official NHS volunteer scheme.

Projects

21. Cllr S Ward gave an update on Sutton noticeboard. Currently still pending planning permission and requested that he could order the noticeboard after permission granted without referring to Council. **This was agreed.** Cllr R Foster suggested that next time, subject to the use of the same contractor, Council should seek planning and ordering at the same time.
22. Application for SAM 2 speeding device has been put on hold indefinitely.

Communication.

23. Cllr J Halls presented an update on the draft resident's survey. Discussed how to move this forward. Cllr T Cleary did not think it was safe to deliver leaflets and favours on line only. Cllr S Ward agrees we should try electronically, and Cllr R Foster suggested using the website polling feature. **Agreed Cllr J Halls will revisit the original proposed survey format and send to councillors before the next meeting. Documents can then be agreed and printed ready to go out as soon as lock down is over.**
24. Cllr R Foster gave an update on website. Cllr R Foster would like us to put anything on that is not covid related. Cllr S Ward requested the usage stats and particularly any increased usage post the COVID-19 leaflet drop. Also requested a link from messageboard to website Grapevine. **Cllr R Foster to review.**

Clerk – (Public Excluded) (Clerk Excluded)

25. End of probation period. Council happy with performance and probation period is complete.
26. Line manager is the Chair. Going forward discussions need to take place to set Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and additional training requirements. **JH.**

Matters for next meeting and any emergency items.

Cllr Colin Foulger explained, on request, that the Ketteringham Refuse Tip is a small one and staff found it impossible to keep their distance. That is why it will remain closed.

Next meeting to be confirmed, Thursday 28th May 2020 7.30 pm.

A zoom link is to be advertised and go on the messageboard to allow public participation.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.

Chairman's signature..... Date