

NASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES - NASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 14th April 2021 at 7.42 pm.GMT following the Annual Parish Meeting

In accordance with provision laid down by The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, during a period of encouraged 'social distancing', this meeting was held by means of internet video and telephone communication in a virtual setting, using Zoom software. All members were always able to hear proceedings and members of the public had been given opportunity to attend.

21/1901 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

PRESENT: Cllr Tony Cooper, Cllr Rebecca Downey, Cllr Paul Monks, Cllr Robert Peterson (Chairman), Cllr Susie Tinsley. Apologies received from: Alan Burns, Dec Downey. Officer present: The clerk. Members of the public present.

21/1902 RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

A blanket dispensation was in place to allow discussion regarding planning application relating to the chairman's property.

21/1903 MINUTES OF THE MEETING(S) HELD IN MARCH 2021 as previously circulated.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the March parish council meeting. The minutes will be signed when covid restrictions allow.

21/1904 QUESTIONS OR ADDRESS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

There were none, but there was an observation regarding the technical difficulties in accessing the meeting (which was caused by the annual village assembly meeting being in progress).

21/1905 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

Update on first meeting of steering committee and confirm any action points: The vision statement was considered and agreed to encompass the various necessary vision points. A few additional points will be added to widen the vision to be completely inclusive, with facilities for everyone, not just old or young, adding vibrancy about the village and add environmental sustainability.

21/1906 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

a) NE/21/00474/LDE | Certificate of Lawfulness for existing development/Use: Use of land to the rear for parking of vehicles in connection to Watkins Garage | 66 Church Street Nassington. It was agreed that as the council has, since the previous century, been fielding approaches from the community raising a broad manner of concerns, neighbours' concerns, county and district involvement, police and safer community team involvement, planning enforcement and allotment enforcement actions for well over 20 years it would be failing the wider community if it did not take a strong stance against this proposal. Members had read submissions on the planning portal which cited reasons the land has not been used in a lawful way and concurred with everything put forward. The parish council has records going back at least two decades that can support the concerns put forward that cars are being stored unlawfully on land not belonging to the person who had left them there, creating a neighbourhood nuisance and potentially causing environmental contaminations. There is little evidence of garage-mechanic commercial activity in the vicinity, with the area being used effectively as a junk yard, spoiling the neighbourhood amenity, and creating a blight at the allotment area and on the Right of Way. There is no evidence of support from people living in the village. The vehicles and associated detritus is parked on the right of way, causing unlawful obstruction. It was **RESOLVED** that the council will object to the proposal of a certificate of lawful use.

b) NE/21/00356/FUL | A new green house to replace the existing and a new timber shed | 20 Church Street Nassington: It was **RESOLVED** that the council has no objections to the proposals.

21/1907 COMMUNITY MATTERS / PROJECTS:

a) Benches: Public amenity in Woodnewton Road. The requests for benches received from people who live in the immediate area were noted, but it was agreed that there is not an appropriate solution to the issue of lack of public seating in Woodnewton Road.

b) Outdoor gym update: There was a short discussion regarding an online campaign to generate interest and the improvements to the area.

c) Pocket park – A community initiative to clear some of the areas at the pocket park has been embraced by the wider community, led by a core of people who have been working very hard on spreading the word to encourage people to get involved and volunteer with helping. It was agreed that by custom and practice, the parish council is the de-facto possessor of the land and in effect has occupier's liability. The council's public liability insurance will cover the volunteers. It was **RESOLVED** to procure an arboricultural report on the trees at the pocket park along with those at the other areas for which the council has or shares occupier's liability, so to include the cemetery.

A local supplier will apparently be installing fencing at the pocket park, but it must be sited in the correct place and be of a design that does not endanger children, from falling close to the road if it is climbable, and other users. Because the parish council would be ultimately accountable should an accident occur, it must re-establish its responsibility, that it stepped back from in the mid 20teens, in managing the risks and realising the liabilities that it could face.

It was **RESOLVED** to procure a bench for the park and to consider individual requests for funding as they arise, as well as apply to the East Northants Resource Management Facility grant fund for further purchases.

There was a brief discussion regarding wildflower planting on parish council maintained land – the clerk will liaise with the groundwork contractor and the churchwardens/vicar.

21/1908 GOVERNANCE MATTERS:

a) It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the following temporary delegation scheme as an interim measure, as recommended by NorthantsCALC, in case the matter of convening lawful council meetings is not resolved. This allows for remote meetings before the council feels it safe to re-convene in-person meetings:

"In response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK and in the event that it is not possible to convene a lawful meeting of the council in a reasonable time, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any such decision will be taken in consultation with the chairman of the parish council and/or by electronic consultation with all members. This includes execution of any decisions taken at any meeting convened electronically. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the council after the council meeting at which the delegation was put in place."

b) Section 1 of the AGAR along with guidelines laid out by SAAA Practitioners Guide had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that members of the council acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. Furthermore, members confirmed, to the best of their knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, for each of the statements, to answer in the affirmative to confirm: The council prepared accounting statements in accordance with the accounts and audit regulations; made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding public money and resources in its charge; has only done what it has the legal power to and has complied with proper practices in so doing; gave all persons the opportunity to inspect and question the accounts; considered and documented financial and other risk and dealt with them properly; arranged for an independent internal audit and disclosed everything it should have about business activities and **RESOLVED** to approve section 1 of the AGAR. The chairman and the clerk will sign the annual governance statement prior to its submission to the internal auditor in a social distanced responsible way.

c) There are local council elections on May 6th, but there are fewer nominations than there are seats, so the one for Nassington will be uncontested. There is at least one likely candidate for co-option at the May meeting. Member will give thought to suitable candidates for co-option.

d) Meetings after May 7th remain unclear in terms of how and where meetings can be held. The legislation allowing remote meetings falls away on 6th May, but unrestricted meetings are not permitted under covid restriction

laws until after June 21st. An appeal has been lodged with the high courts asking for a ruling whether place in context of the 1972 Local Government Act can be interpreted to mean not in the same place, but in a remote setting. If this fails, the first meeting of the council after the elections on May 6th will have to take place physically in person to elect a chairman, but with the delegation scheme in place, the council can lawfully conduct its business until July or September.

21/1909 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

- a) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. had been i and approve accounts year end 31st March 2021.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** to approve Section 2 of the AGAR which had been circulated in advance of the meeting detailing the following figures:

		Year Ending	
		31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £
1	Balances brought forward	71,463	98,036
2	(+) Annual Precept	48,635	49,755
3	(+) Total other receipts	2,137	21,484
4	(-) Staff Costs	10,235	9,936
5	(-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-	-
6	(-) Total other payments	13,964	73,035
7	(=) Balances carried forward	98,036	86,304
8	Total cash and investments	98,036	86,304
9	Total fixed assets and long term assets	185,720	213,475
10	Total borrowings		

- c) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following invoices / accounts for payment or paid under delegated authority:

Goods/Service	Payee	Nett	Gross	Power
Clerks salary	S Rodger	564.39		LGA ⁱ s112 (2)
Pension	Nest		46.01	Pensions Act 2008
SSE	Electricity	174.67	208.29	PCA 1957 s3/HA1980 S301 ⁱⁱ
Grass cutting	Plough		110.00	PHA ⁱⁱⁱ /
Training	Northants CALC		10.50	LGA ^{iv} s111
Membership	Northants CALC	386.63	571.63	LGA ^v s111
audit		185.00		LAAA ^{vi} S7or LGA ^{vii} s111
Membership	SLCC		81.90	LGA ^{viii} s111

21/1910 OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, NOTICES OR REPORTS / CORRESPONDENCE / REPRESENTATIONS OF NOTE:

Email re defibrillators had been distributed;

21/1911 NEWSLETTER / SOCIAL MEDIA / COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS.

Pocket park; elections; outdoor gym, new members

21/1912 MATTERS TO NOTE – NOT FOR DECISION.

A huge vote of thanks was noted to the councillors that were not standing for re-election after 10 years of unstinting service.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 12TH MAY 2021

Approved by Nassington Parish Council:

Signature of Chairman

Date:

ⁱ LGA = Local Government Act 1972

ⁱⁱ Parish Councils Act 1957 s3 / Highways Act 1980 s301

ⁱⁱⁱ Public Health Act 1875 Highways Act 1980

^{iv} LGA = Local Government Act 1972

^v LGA = Local Government Act 1972

^{vi} Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

^{vii} LGA = Local Government Act 1972

^{viii} LGA = Local Government Act 1972