

WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council have co-opted Jade Roper for the vacancy of councillor.

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of Walpole Parish Council held via online video, on Thursday 10th of December 2020 at from 7.30pm.

Present :

Councillors – William Brooks, Heather Smith, Linda Matthews, Richard Blunt, Adrian Eveleigh, Andy Bliss, Richard Green, Claire Robinson, David Lawty and Charlene Campion.

Councillors - Julian Kirk and Sandra Squires (19.38)

Clerk – Caroline Boyden

Five Members of the Public

Welcome from Richard Green, Chairman to everyone.

1. Apologies – to accept apologies and reasons for absence:
None
2. To remind all councillors of their duty to abide by the Code of Conduct
The Chair reminded all councillors of their duty to abide by the Code of Conduct.
3. Declarations of Interest of any items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensations.
Cllr Matthews – Finance / Cllr Champion – Santa Parade / Cllr Lawty – Community Centre
4. Public Participation - to allow public participation (3 minutes allowed per speaker, up to a maximum of 15 minutes in total). No participation.
5. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 12th of November 2020, having been previously circulated were proposed as a being a true record of the meeting. Proposed Cllr Eveleigh and seconded by Cllr Matthews. Unanimously agreed by those present at that meeting.
6. Matters Arising – to record matters arising from the last meeting:
 - 6.1 50:50 Partnership 21/22 – The completed application has been sent to County and acknowledgement received.
 - 6.2 Willow Trees update – Cllr Squire advised that the County Council are still saying this is not on their property and it was suggested that the Borough Council or Freebridge could be the owners. Cllrs Squire and Blunt to discuss and update at the January meeting.
7. To receive reports:
 - 7.1 Highways to be contacted again regarding the flooding outside Wash Dyke.
 - 7.2 County and Borough Councillors Reports.
Cllr Blunt advised that the positive tests for Covid continue to be high and is asking Borough for more information on our area. The website to find out more information is [Daily summary | Coronavirus in the UK \(data.gov.uk\)](https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/) / <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>
The good news is that the rate of deaths has fallen.
Cllr Blunt stressed the importance of staying at home as much as possible and to only make essential journeys.

Cllr Squires discussed the following report:

Norfolk's Covid Winter Support Scheme – We are aiming to support as many residents as possible this winter to access financial and other support if they are facing hardship. The scheme is particularly aimed at families (although people without children will also qualify) and will provide support for those suffering financial hardship over the winter months due to Covid-19.

Applications to the new support scheme can be made online, via the existing Norfolk Assistance Scheme at www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS or you can call 0344 800 8020. Norfolk Libraries will also be able to help with applying online.

In addition to this scheme, we are working with food voucher company Edenred to provide support for all those eligible for free school meals, children in the early years who receive pupil premium and all of the council's care leavers during the Christmas holidays. We are encouraging eligible families to register and apply for free school meals through their school, so that they begin to receive support in time for the school holidays.

The Covid Winter Support scheme can help with:

- o Day to day living costs, including food and energy bills
- o Daily essentials such as toiletries, sanitary products, and nappies
- o Food vouchers for the school holidays

As part of the wider package of support for families this winter, the council is also extending the Norfolk Assistance Scheme, which already provides support for food, fuel, clothes and other essential household items to Norfolk's residents experiencing hardship.

More information is available online at www.norfolk.gov.uk/covidwintersupport

Christmas Collection e-gift appeal – We are launching our Christmas Collection this year to provide gifts for 16- and 17-year olds living in supported accommodation. It has been a particularly tough year for everyone but especially so for those young people who are in our care and are just taking their first steps in learning to be independent. We usually run a gift appeal but due to Covid, we are asking for donations of e-gift certificates instead. Full details are available on the website.

Further information is below and at www.norfolk.gov.uk/christmascollection.

Free digital equipment for vulnerable young people – Reconditioned laptops, access to Wi-Fi, broadband dongles are just some of the things available to help deprived families unable to access the internet during these Covid Times.

To apply contact the Norfolk Assistance Scheme www.norfolk.gov.uk/nas or call 0344 800 8020 (option 1)

Covid figures – I am not going to put the Covid figures down as they change day to day. Infection rates were definitely down when we came out of lockdown and went into Tier 2, however they are now rising again and I would advise continued caution, especially with Christmas looming.

Back to School - Data from 26th November 2020 indicates that 99.7% of Norfolk schools are open with attendance at 87.6% both of which are above the national average. There are currently 199 education settings where a positive case has been reported which equates to 159 situations, 22 outbreaks and 18 clusters.

Holt Hall – Yesterday Cabinet agreed to cease Outdoor Learning at Holt Hall and to sell off the site. Holt Hall has provided outdoor learning opportunities for generations of Norfolk Children, especially from the West of the County. The Friends of Holt Hall have applied for it to be registered as an asset

of community value. This is effectively stall any potential sale for the time being, giving councillors opposed to the closure and community groups time to come up with an alternative plan. Given we are in a world where it is increasingly difficult to get children away from the online world and that Covid
Page 2 of 4

Signed :

Date :

has taught us that the outdoors and being in nature is so beneficial to both mental and physical health, it seems short sighted for the council to be selling it off without fully investigating all other options.

At last month's NCC meeting, council amended the Independent Groups motion calling for carers to be given a fairer pay deal, including to be paid the Real Living Wage. The council did not want to increase pay for carers due to the cost but did agree to continue to lobby government for more money for social care and for parity in pay between NHS staff and Carers.

1 Million Trees Project – we finally got round to what the council like to call “a soft launch” of the 1 million trees project. By the end of this year, we expect to have planted between 30,000-45,000 trees, a little behind schedule due to Covid but we want to have the right tree in the right place. Parishes will soon be receiving a ‘Tree Charter’ and a briefing on how they can get involved. Councillor will also be receiving a “Tree Allowance” for members to be able to buy trees from a personal budget. More details will be available after next week's Environment meeting, but I am very excited about the way things are progressing.

In other news – I did not win the Environment & Sustainability Award, but it was a lovely evening hearing about the achievements of councillors all-round the country. Last week at the Borough Council meeting, I had placed an item on the agenda asking the council to extend the care & repair service to provide a handyman service for care leavers in the Borough. I am involved with Care Leavers as the chair of a subgroup at the County Council and we have stories where care leavers forget how to program their boilers or staple sheets to their windows as they do not know how to put up curtain poles. Bearing in mind that other young people would call on family members to help, Care Leavers do not have that back up support available. It was due to be debated but due to political game playing from both sides of the Chamber and the Conservatives voting not to extend the meeting, we will now have to wait until January to get round to some work that could actually, benefit the Borough.

And finally – what does a Councillor do in their spare time? Sailing – yes, rowing – yes, singing – apparently. My rowing team The Norfolk BrOARds have produced a cover version of the Christmas classic ‘Santa Baby’ to help raise funds for a new boat so that we can row the Atlantic and for some publicity and an awful lot of laughs. It is available for pre-release now, but is officially released on Friday 11th December on streaming & download services. It can be pre-saved here for Spotify etc, or search The Norfolk BrOARds on iTunes. <https://ditto.fm/santa-baby-the-norfolk-board> It is also being played (again) on Radio Norfolk on Thursday morning as part of the Breakfast Shows “Kayleigh’s Christmas Carols”

- 7.3 Play Area - Dog waste signs have been posted and the play area is being used with the staggered school leaving times helping to ensure the restrictions are met.
- 7.4 Community Centre– Cllr Lawty advised that centre remained closed.
Defibrillator – discussions took place regarding the replacement batteries and cabinet along with the electrics and it was agreed to go ahead with the electrics, ordering a new battery @ £230.00 ex VAT and a new cabinet at £475 ex VAT. Cllr Lawty to arrange for the electrics to be checked and if a separate power supply is required. Once the new cabinet is fitted, it was agreed that the old one should be checked for the damage as only 2 years old. Proposed Cllr Lawty, seconded Cllr Brooks, and unanimously agreed.
The paperwork to be collected from the Community Centre by Cllr Roper to Cllrs Campion and Bliss to check and then advise the Clerk.

The East of England Ambulance Service are now checking the unit every two weeks.

- 7.5 Cllr Matthews advised that the December colour edition of the Village Crier, was available and on the website. Most of the deliveries had been made with more tomorrow. The new Editor will be Mrs. Jane Eveleigh who will produce the February edition.
The Chairman and councillors thanked Cllr Matthews for her work on the Crier.
The Clerk advised that the website top 10 viewed pages were: Home: 136, Minutes 89, Planning: 164, Crier: 83, Agendas 27, Parish Council: 20, useful information 13, latest news; 12 Community Centre: 8, Contact us 12. 623 views in total for November.
- 7.6 Cllr Eveleigh advised nothing to add from last month and still awaiting signage.
- 7.7 Community Fund Projects Working Group – Cllr Bliss advised that the concrete base for the new bench was in place and installation of the bench to follow.
- 7.8 Communications/Correspondence. The parishioner letter regarding change of address to St. Peter was approved.
The Santa Parade was discussed, and it was stressed that the event had nothing to do with the Parish Council and for information only. Cllr Campion advised that the police had been advised and there was no problems with holding the parade. The event was welcomed and seen as a positive event for the parish. Cllr Blunt to advise Cllr Campion of the email address for the Covid team at Borough. It is hoped that the event goes ahead next year and should be put to the Parish Council at the October meeting to give time for discussions.
The clerk was checking all policies and procedures with the code of conduct to be updated at next meeting.

8. Planning

- 8.1 No new applications
- 8.2 An appeal has been raised for the retrospective application for the Erection of detached machine store (with storage above) and erection of external bar and associated change of use. at Cedar View, Walnut Road.

9. Finance

- 9.1 To approve the Financial Reports for payments/receipts & bank reconciliation for November and proposed payments for December – proposed Cllr Eveleigh, seconded Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed.
Payments: Staff Costs £340.56, Minuteman for December Crier - £968.00, Crier Editor expenses £60.00, Fencing for play area £23.99, Scribe renewal £306.48
- 9.2 Draft Budget – discussions on the precept took place with a no precept proposed by Cllr Lawty, seconded by Cllr Bliss was withdrawn when a 1% increase was proposed by Cllr Lawty, seconded by Cllr Brooks, with a 2.5% increase proposed by Cllr Blunt, seconded by Cllr Bliss. A vote was taken with 2 for 1% and 7 for 2.5% - 1 against Cllr Lawty.
Cllr Blunt asked what the election cost was for and the clerk explained this covered costs if an election was called by parishioners when a vacancy occurs.
Cllr Matthews agreed that the budget for the Crier would remain the same as 20/21.

10. Items for next agenda – Market Lane Survey update
11. The next meeting will be on Thursday 14th of January 2021 from 19.30 hrs via Zoom.

Meeting ended at 20.40pm