



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NORTHIAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2021

**1) APOLOGIES:** District Cllr Martin Mooney (MM), Sarah Giles (CIC)

**2) ATTENDEES:** Councillors Jacqueline Harding (JH) Chair, Tony Biggs (TB) Vice-Chair, Penny Farmer (PF), Dean Johnson (DJ), Robert Maltby (RM), Anthony Wontner-Smith (AWS), Jon Streatfield (JS), Councillor Sue Schlesinger (SS), Councillor Tony Wadie (TW)

Also present were County Cllr Mr Paul Redstone (PR), District Cllr Tony Ganly (TG), Jacky Broad (JB) (CIC), 2 PCSO's and 10 members of the public.

**3) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** County Councillor Paul Redstone declared an interest in Item 10 a)

**4) PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Maximum of 15 minutes)**

- Mr Gray, 10 High Park Close, complained to NPC that certain letters of objection concerning a recent planning application, were posted on the RDC site. He was very upset about this and was advised to speak to District Councillor Tony Ganley, as a member of Rother District Council (RDC), on the subject.
- Mr Borg, 26 Cricketers Field, attended to highlight the issue that the communal shrubbery on the Donsmead Estate was not being maintained as it had been previously. Cllr Johnson is going to visit the site to take photographs and these will be passed to the clerk in order that she can contact Optivo again, to ask them to deal with the situation.
- Zoe Burden, one of new PCSO's, introduced herself and explained that the PCSO's patrol area was quite extensive but they hoped to be able to be a 'presence' and patrol the local villages when they were able to. Cllr. Johnson highlighted the issues with playground area and how the anti-social behaviour and damage to the playground equipment was becoming a major issue of concern. PCSO Burden said that they will increase patrols in the areas of concern in Northiam.

**5) MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021:**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record and it was agreed that these would be signed by the Chair.

**6) OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS THAT STAND REFERRED TO AT THE NEXT MEETING**

It was resolved that this extra agenda item would not be required in the future.

**7) REPORTS BY PARISH, COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:**

- TB** A meeting was held at the cemetery and NPC would like to thank Martin, Pam, Christine and Bill who are volunteers and have cleared all the brambles and weeds from around the chapel in the cemetery, it is looking so much tidier. Also, Michael and Sue who look after the commonwealth war graves for keeping them free of weeds. The Parish Council appreciated the support of residents, and more volunteers were needed to help keep the cemetery free of brambles and weeds.  
The footpath group were greatly impressed with the new SFF footpath.

He also wondered if it would be possible to continue the Pop-Up Pub through the winter, and RM had asked if a Halloween Party would be possible?

- AW-S** States the bus stop opposite the school has, at last, had the excess foliage removed by our contractors. However, AWS was not impressed with the pruning and he and RM undertook to complete the job themselves. Also, it was noted there was some plaster board fly-tipping in the region of Strawberry Hole, which has since been removed.
- JS** Complaints have been received whereby the Highways 'Site Line' is being compromised by a shrub in the grass verge outside 'Longview, Dixter Road', which is directly opposite the grass triangle at 'Superstitious Corner'. As the actual owner of the shrub is unknown, even though it appears to be growing on the public highway, JS said that he will investigate and if necessary, contact ESCC Highways and report to the enforcement officer.
- DJ** Playground report has been circulated. Unfortunately, someone has now managed to completely wrap the swings all round the support beam at the top of the equipment. It will need a set of ladders to restore them to their original position. Also, one of the chains that supports one of the swings also appears to have been removed. The notice on the roundabout clearly states that it is unsafe and even though NPC have tried to close the ride off to the public with signs and tape restraints. Children and even parents, with very young children, are still using this piece of equipment. Therefore, the Council had decided to remove it completely from the site in order to prevent any possible accidents. TB will contact a scrap-metal dealer to have it taken away. Meanwhile DJ will continue to chase a company for an outstanding quote in order that NPC can decide if they can afford to replace this piece of damaged equipment.
- PF** A second quote was sent to Cllr. Mooney with regard to the missing gate by the Scout Hut. She had a meeting with Cllr. Mooney last month, however the gate is still missing.

County Councillor Redstone advised that he had sent his report to NPC, and there were no questions.

District Councillor Ganly advised that the community grant of £130K (£65K every six months), has unfortunately all been spent. However, there is still a small amount available - £500 - for Parish Councils in order for them to be able to celebrate the Queens Jubilee next year.

Jackie Broad reported on the CIC/NPC liaison committee and requested financial support from NPC in order to be able to proceed with the following: -

- a) 3 manhole covers to be replaced - £250
- b) Resurfacing the track above the Hub to provide additional parking - £1500
- c) To deal with the damp within the 'Gryffon Building' in order to make the building useable - 200
- d) Maintenance to the barn roof at field 11 - £700 materials (labour will be free).
- e) Resurfacing the track - hopefully with 'free' hardcore.

NPC have agreed in principle for this work to be carried out but the Finance Committee will meet, hopefully next week, in order to be able to finalise the amount that NPC can allocate to the CIC. This will be in the region of £15-20K. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

With reference to members interest in having the Pop-Up Pub open during the winter, she explained that as the attendance at the Pop-Up Pub is not always guaranteed it might be wasteful on the Cask Ale as this will not keep from one week to the next. Also, having customers during the darker evenings is not very safe as currently there is no lighting system and it is therefore not always possible to ensure that everyone has actually left the premises.

## **8) PLANNING:**

Councillors have discussed the possibility, where appropriate, of holding a separate monthly meeting in order to accommodate the large number of planning applications and to allow for a more detailed discussion.

- a) **RR/2021/2109/T Oak Tree Lodge, Dixter Lane, Northiam, TN31 6PR**  
Oak Tree (T1) - reduce crown by approximately 20%, thin crown by approximately 5% and remove lowest limb overhanging neighbouring property.  
Members required the Tree Officer to comment at this is a tree has a TPO on it.
- b) **RR/2021/1567/P - Newlands Dixter Lane Northiam TN31 6PR**  
Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning approval RR/2018/2282/P - to provide 3no Velux windows to the rear roof slope of plots 1 to 3, to new bedroom and 1no new ensuite. It was AGREED to support the application.
- c) **RR/2021/1423/O - 1 Hayes Plat, Northiam TN31 6HQ**  
Lawful development certificate for the proposed installation of Velux window into our loft at the rear of the property to provide natural light in the loft area. It was AGREED to support the application.
- d) **RR/2021/1210/P & RR/2021/1211/L - Clench Green, Beales Lane, Northiam TN31 6LJ**  
Single storey extension to existing dwelling. It was AGREED to support the application.
- e) **RR/2021/1107/P - Oak View, Quickbourne Lane, Northiam TN31 6QY**  
Extensions and new first floor to existing residential bungalow.  
It was AGREED to support the application.
- f) **RR/2021/1069/P - Southease, Station Road, Northiam, TN31 6QA**  
Erection of single storey rear extension  
It was AGREED to support the application.
- g) **RR/2021/1061/O - 4 Knelle View, Station Road, Northiam TN31 6QD -**  
Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed single storey utility room extension, attached to the rear of the existing house and existing garage.  
NPC had already commented on this application but those comments were not on the RDC website, but have now been added.
- h) **RR/2021/904/P - The Oak House, Beckley Road, Northiam TN31 6JB**  
Installation of sand school and lunging arena, with hydraulic horse exerciser (retrospective).  
It was AGREED to support the application.

ALL PLANNING DECISIONS HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED TO COUNCILLORS:

**9) OTHER PLANNING MATTERS:**

- a) Alliance Homes Development Document -  
Councillor Farmer asked District Councillor Ganly if the District Councilors at RDC were going to support the villages against what she considered to be the 100% affordable onslaught by Optivo, who she felt had been targeting planning sites in villages thought the county? District Councillor Ganly confirmed that this was not the preferred housing mix as per RDC's policies.

**10) VILLAGE MATTERS:**

- a) **Appointment of new Clerk/RFO**  
The decision has been deferred subject to ongoing negotiations with the preferred candidate.
- b) **NPC Procurement Procedures**

Councillors were very grateful for the offer by Trevor Gibson, but felt that at present they had sufficient procedures in place to protect the Council's financial position.

**c) Social Housing Development**

NPC is still trying to convene a meeting with Optivo who do not want to hold a meeting in person due to COVID. NPC feels this is not acceptable provided proper safeguards are in place and government advice is followed, and have reminded Optivo of this and are endeavouring to push for this solution.

**d) Drains scope at St Francis Field**

The Council has agreed that 'Happy Drains' carry out the scope work at SFF.

**e) Benches (Peter and Ray)**

NPC would very much like to commemorate Ray Harrington-Lowe & Pete Hayman with a bench as previously discussed. However, Ray's family wish to have a bespoke bench placed within St. Frances Field and NPC will therefore review the commemorative bench at a later date.

**f) School Crossing Patrol**

It was agreed that the Clerk will write to the local sponsor (Maloney) of the School Crossing Patrol in order to confirm how the money will be managed. In the event of a surplus, it has been suggested that it could be used for other projects for the benefit of the school children. The sponsor has very kindly increased their donation and NPC are in the process of arranging signs and a banner to be displayed in the village to advertise their most generous and very much appreciated sponsorship.

**g) Housing Needs Survey**

NPC are currently displaying adverts around the village which will explain that every household will soon be receiving a housing needs survey questionnaire which we encourage everyone to complete in order that NPC can proceed with their promise.

**h) Telephone Box**

All suggestions would be welcomed on the best use for our iconic and very special village structure.

**11) CORRESPONDENCE OTHER THAN THAT ALREADY CIRCULATED:**

**12) FINANCE: - None**

All financial information has been previously circulated to all Councillors & is available on the web site

**13) CHEQUES FOR SIGNATURE: - Approved**

**14) PUBLIC QUESTIONS – 2 minutes, each member of the public – None**

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

Dated \_\_\_\_\_ 2021