

Minutes of Tunstall Parish Council Meeting

Held on 10th March 2021 ~ 7.00pm

Via Zoom Video Conference

Present

Cllr. Steve Smith (Chair)

Cllr. Katherine Barton

Cllr. Patricia Bessey

Cllr. Oliver Morgan

Cllr. Niels Petersen

Cllr. Kevin Ross

Cllr. Andy Vince

Cllr. Sophy Yeoman

Judi Hallett (Clerk)

Three members of the public

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest and any Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items (either pecuniary or non-pecuniary):

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Public Participation - To receive:

a) Reports from County and District Councillors:

- Cllr. Andrew Reid – thrice weekly reports regarding Coronavirus were being received.
- Cllr Ray Herring – No report had been received.

b) Reports or comment from any member of the public – The following comments were made:

- Continued Flooding in Tunstall – A member of the public listed all the continual individual areas of flooding in the village (Junction of School Road and Blaxhall Church Road, School Road (at Old Hall Farm), Snape Road (at Standon House), Orford Road and the Green Man Pond) and asked for the Parish Council’s acknowledgment that these existed [given]. He acknowledged that the flooding did not affect property or businesses, but it did mean cyclists had to circumvent some floods and as a result ended up on the wrong side of the road and that, in some circumstances, the flooding was too deep for average cars to pass (this was particularly true for the flood outside Old Hall Farm). It was suggested that it was Highway’s responsibility to resolve these issues, not the Parish Councils or any other third party and that very soon a fatal accident would occur because of the various areas of flooding. Reference was also made to the ‘Report It’ tool where reports were often closed without resolution or comment back to the reporter.

Cllr. Smith acknowledged that all the areas of flooding listed were correct but that the Parish Council had been informed on numerous occasions that SCC did not have the resources to deal with flooding areas where properties were not affected. However, it was agreed that the Clerk should write to SCC Highways again to highlight these different areas and to notify them of the likely danger to cyclists and drivers of a fatality, caused by the flooding.

Action: Clerk

Chair’s initials:

4. To agree minutes of meetings dated 10th February 2021:

Cllr. Vince proposed these be adopted as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. Yeoman and all Councillors were in agreement. The Clerk agreed to post them on the Website.

Action: Clerk

5. Planning:

a) To discuss and agree response to the following Applications received:

- i. DC/21/0586/VOC | Variation of Condition Nos. 2, 3 and 5 of DC/18/3756/FUL - Replacement Dwelling - Demolish and replace existing dwelling - Alterations to previously approved drawings | Forest House, Heath Cottages Lane, Tunstall. Councillors made the following comments:
- I have concern that a brick wall is not in keeping with the environment of the area
 - The wall is only 1m high with three courses of separated bricks at the top and will provide additional security for the family living there and stop dogs entering their pond
 - I see no issues as it is not high and with planting will blend in
 - Conclusion: **No Objection** (Prop: Cllr. Bessey, Sec: Cllr. Ross, Votes = For: 6, Against: 1 and Abstain: 1)

6. Multi-Use Games Area – to receive an update on the project from Cllrs. Smith and Vince:

a) Update from the Steering Group – The following update was given by Cllr. Vince:

- Steering Group met on 3rd March
- Bank Account application sent in and should be set up in 4 – 6 weeks
- Potentially a ‘Soft Opening’ towards end April/Beginning May but facility should be ready to open once all the ‘Lockdown’ rules are lifted
- An e-mail will be sent to all who have shown an interest to get some bookings in the diary and test the booking system
- A Grand Opening ceremony may not be possible until July (when larger crowds can gather) and the Notice Board will be put up this week

- b) Discussion on MUGA management options, both short and long term: It was suggested that the Steering Group should continue to run the MUGA until it was fully open and then discussions could start as to how it would be managed going forward. There was no opposition to this.

Action: Cllr Vince

7. Communication – To discuss which news should be highlighted to residents

The following comments were noted:

- The Council should make itself known more
- Each Councillor should be profiled so that residents know what they are interested in and how they can be approached.

Action: Clerk

Chair’s initials:

8. Highways

- a) To receive an update on Highway’s meeting on 4th March from Cllr. Yeoman - Cllr. Yeoman gave a comprehensive report on the meeting (various notes/minutes had been circulated by the Clerk). The fundamental points raised at the meeting were:
- Each village representative spoke of the issues of increased traffic volumes and widths brought to their parish
 - The lack of infrastructure to accommodate continual development (both residential and commercial)
 - All development at Bentwaters Park (BP) was lawful and extraordinarily little objection had been made to it
 - There was ‘no finite limit’ to development potential at BP and each application would be taken on its merits [Mr Ridley]
 - Air quality was not above the legal limits and is being continuously monitored
 - Development in the Local Plan had already been agreed and there was little opposition to it when the plan was agreed
 - BP brought employment and prosperity to the area [Cllr. Herring]
 - Dialogue would continue but there was lack of empathy from ESC and SCC

Cllr. Yeoman was thanked for attending and for her report.

- b) To discuss options raised in mail from SCC Highways (Mr David Chenery) – dated 22nd Feb 2021 – Mail from Mr Chenery had been circulated and a number of comments had been received. The Clerk was asked to draft a reply and circulate for further comment before sending it off.
- c) To receive update on possible grants for the second SID – The Clerk reported that, despite chasing twice, no reply had been received from Cllr. Herring with reference to the grant request. The lack of engagement from Cllr. Herring this year was commented on and the Clerk was asked to approach the ESC Funding Team to ask if they could make direct contact with Cllr. Herring regarding the request.

Action: Clerk

9. Recreation Ground/Community Centre:

- a) To discuss the lease of the Community Hall and surrounding land to the Community Hall Charity and the Trust Deed by which the Charity is run: - Cllr. Petersen explained that, although details of how the land was leased to the Hall Committee and how the Committee was governed by the Trust Deed had now been forwarded to him, he was surprised that this information was not more freely available.

The land and hall were the most valuable asset to the village, and little was published about how it was managed.

He had previously circulated a paper on his thoughts and his proposal was:

Visibility of the way in which the Community Hall is managed and run needs to be improved. This can be achieved as follows.

- A new council document should be produced using as the basis for this, Judi's outline of the lease and trust deed, Steve's draft of current working arrangements, the points identified in the attached document plus anything else that may arise from Council discussion on this subject. Part of this document, i.e., the working arrangements (which could form an annexe to the document) needs to be agreed with the Hall Committee and be subject to review and amendment from time to time. Other documents such as the Risk Assessments should also be amended as required.
- This will provide the baseline for how things are currently operated together with a reference point for subsequent review. It will also identify any risks that need to be regularly reviewed and managed by the Council. This document should be published on the Parish web site in the same way as the other Council Documents

It was agreed that any 'paper' must be developed in conjunction with the Hall Committee and that enhanced understanding of this situation would possibly make any transfer of management of the MUGA away from the Parish Council easier to debate.

The Clerk agreed to draft a paper for comment from the Councillors first and then send to the Hall Committee. It was further commented that the Hall Committee and the Parish Council had worked well together in recent years and that nothing should alter this *status quo*.

- b) Grass Cutting and general maintenance – To receive quotes for enhanced maintenance at the Recreation Ground: - The Clerk reported that, despite chasing, details of enhanced work from ES Norse had not been received. She was asked to continue to chase this and to seek two other quotes.

Cllr. Smith suggested that two elements of the proposed work (fencing in of the Gas Tank and of the Recycling Bins) could potentially be part funded by the Hall Committee as this would enhance the immediate area around the hall and may bring in additional bookings. He agreed to take this suggestion to the next Hall Committee Meeting.

- c) Play Park Regeneration Project – To receive update from the Clerk as to survey of ideas to residents: - The Clerk reported that two residents were interested in working with the PC to improve the Play Park. Unfortunately, neither could be at the meeting and their proposal was not ready to present to the Council. The Clerk was asked to encourage their enthusiasm and to invite them to send their proposals to the Council. Although there was little money in the budget for a major project it was felt some improvements could be made with extraordinarily little expenditure.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Smith

10. Finance Matters:

- a) To review Accounts for February 2021:

The Clerk had circulated the accounts as of 28th February 2021. There were no questions and Cllr. Smith agreed to examine the Bank Statements.

Chair's initials:

- b) To authorise the following Invoices for Payment:
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|--|---------|
| i. J Hallett (expenses and admin for Jan and Feb 2021) | £103.22 |
| ii. SALC (Payroll Service) | £22.80 |
| iii. Suffolk Digital Ltd (6 months Bulletin printing) | £420.00 |

The above payments were proposed by Cllr. Vince, seconded by Cllr. Yeoman and all were in agreement they be paid.

- c) To note Payments made since last meeting:
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|-------------------------------------|---------|
| i. J Hallett (3 Month's Salary) | £774.72 |
| ii. HMRC Cumbernauld (Clerk's PAYE) | £193.80 |

- d) To note Payments received since last meeting:
- i. None

- e) To note Bank Balances as of 28th February 2021:
- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| i. Barclays Bank (Current Account) | £6,294.21 |
| ii. IBS (Tunstall Parish Council) | £6,446.82 |
| iii. IBS (Tunstall Common Fund) | £57,872.20 |

Action: Clerk

11. Tunstall Common – To discuss the long-term plan for Tunstall Common:

Councillors commented that many did not know the vision for the Common over the long-term and that, although they fully trusted the management that Cllr. Ross was putting in place each year, the fact that a management plan was not documented was a risk to the Council.

Cllr. Ross made the following comments:

- It would be great to have a walk around the Common (when restrictions allow), so that all Councillors can see what a brilliant piece of land the Council own and how diverse it is.
- There was a 'Management Plan' made when the Stewardship Agreement was put in place, I will dig this out and send it to everyone
- The Stewardship Agreement comes to an end soon, but it is unclear at the moment what way land management will be guided. There are many different opinions on how land like the Common should be managed and, if you want a grant to help with the management, you will have to comply with their rules.
- However, there is nothing to say we cannot have our own Management Plan. We have a significant fund for management of the Common, used correctly this will last for many years.
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust manage Blaxhall Common and as a consequence, they receive all the grant money; I, officially, receive the Stewardship money as the 'Agent' but it then is handed to the Parish Council.
- The Common is full of wildlife (such as Nightjar) that, ordinarily, should not be there; they are present because of the way the land has been managed.

In conclusion, Cllr. Ross agreed to send the previous Management Plan to all and to organise a walk of the Common when restrictions permitted.

Action: Cllr. Ross

Chair's initials:

12. To discuss Meeting Dates and use of the Main Hall or the Committee Room in the Community Hall

The Clerk brought to Councillor’s attention two matters. Firstly, that remote meetings were only permitted up until 6th May 2021 and secondly, that social distancing would probably be advised for many months to come and it would therefore probably be necessary for the Council to use the Main Hall at the Community Centre when it did meet in person again. The main hall was used on a Wednesday evening, but the second Tuesday was free.

It was agreed to monitor the situation until the April meeting as it was hoped a steer from Government would soon be available.

13. To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of Next Meeting:

Items to add to the next agenda:

- Action to take on the spare Football Goal
- To discuss Deer culling in Tunstall Common and Forest
- Installation of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points

The date of the next meeting was agreed for Wednesday 14th April 2021, 7.00pm, via Video/Audio Conference.

Members of the public were asked to leave the meeting and the following item was taken in camera

14. New Clerk:

- a) To receive details of applications for the role and to establish a working group to interview the candidates with timetable – The Clerk gave details of the applications received for the position of Parish Clerk. It was agreed that Cllrs. Bessey and Barton would form an Interview Group and any interview would be conducted based on ‘Competencies’. The Clerk was asked to contact all candidates and arrange an interview at a suitable time for all.
- b) To discuss support for the new Clerk from individual Councillors – It was agreed that the successful candidate would be supported in their role and specific assistance would be assessed once the position was filled and if any gaps in competency were realised. The Clerk suggested the post be filled with effect from 1st June 2021, with June acting as the handover month and her official leaving date being 30th June. This was agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.17pm.

Signed:
Cllr. Steve Smith, Chair

Date:

Judi Hallett
Clerk to Tunstall Parish Council

Chair’s initials: