

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH MEETING OF HOPTON CUM KNETTISHALL PARISH COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021 AT 7PM VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING, DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED  
AT MAY MEETING**

PRESENT: Councillors: L. Macklin (Chair), R. Capon, A Hanks, J. Taylor, M Filler, D. Faiers, B Shotbolt, R. Salter (Clerk), Cllr C. Bull & Cllr J.Spicer

Invited guests - Su Delve, Sam Norris and David Stansfield

3 members of public.

		<b>ACTION</b>
1.	Apologies:	
2.	Declarations of interest: None	
3.	<p>Sam Norris from Knettishall Heath, Suffolk Wildlife Trust gave an update to the meeting. She introduced David Stansfield who is a new full time warden at Knettishall Heath.</p> <p>Visitor experience and engagement</p> <p>1. Summary of the problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasingly high visitor numbers generating rising costs in upkeep of toilet and car park facilities.</li> <li>- Rising costs in rubbish clear up during peak season (May – Sep inclusive).</li> <li>- Rise in antisocial behaviour (ASB) including: fly tipping, littering, racing of cars and bikes, recreational gatherings, loud music, alcohol and drug abuse, confrontational visitors, bbqs and fires, harassment of livestock, vandalism, physical and verbal abuse of staff.</li> </ul> <p>2. Solutions</p> <p>We have been working closely with police and the local community to develop a strategy to tackle the problems and protect the heath for its wildlife and visitors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A permanent BBQ/open flame ban active from August 2020</li> <li>- Security firm employed from June 2020 to September 2020 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights</li> <li>- New refuse bins and trail cameras are on order to assist with clear up and prevention of fly tipping and general littering, with thanks to Councillor Carol Bull for assistance with funding.</li> </ul> <p>Autumn 2020 securement of funding from DEFRA for extra staff and a catering van:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extra staffing for a full time permanent Assistant Warden now in post</li> <li>- Introduction of Trust catering van to operate in main car park 7 days a week. This will allow the Trust to have an increased site presence to create a visitor welcome and reduce the incidents of ASB. It will also allow us to further convey our wildlife message, whilst generating much needed revenue to maintain the site.</li> <li>- Employment of two visitor staff to operate the catering van and visitor welcome.</li> </ul> <p>Reintroduction of car park charges in main car park</p>	

*L Macklin*

*R Salter*



In order to assist with the need for site presence, as well as contributing towards the rising costs in toilet maintenance, car park upkeep and rubbish clear up, we will be reintroducing a car park charge to the main car park as follows:

- Number plate recognition system to operate 24/7. This should greatly help with preventing ASB at night. - The charge will be accessible for all, around the region of £3 per day with an option for a 2-hour payment. Please note the charges have not been confirmed yet.
- Installation is forecasted for mid-May to mid-June.

#### Trial run of permanently closing middle car park

The small car park in the middle of the reserve opposite the main area of heathland receives the highest incidences of ASB, as regular as daily/nightly during peak season. The frequency, continuity, and seriousness of these problems over the long term has led to this decision. The closure of this car park should also help reduce disturbance to the sensitive area of heathland. A date has not yet been set to start the trial, but it will be well publicised in advance.

The Trust do recognize the trial closure of this car park will dramatically reduce parking on the reserve and could lead to increased roadside parking. To mitigate for this, we have been in discussions with Suffolk Highways and the local community to adopt the following measures:

- The creation of a new overflow in the main car park to accommodate at least 30 extra spaces. This should allow for zero net loss of parking spaces on the reserve.
- A free morning time slot for all in the main car park, every day, to allow our regular visitors free parking time in this location. Car park charges will likely begin from 10am (to be confirmed).
- Successful discussions with Suffolk Highways have allowed us to develop a plan to inhibit roadside parking. The introduction of earth bunds within a metre width of the carriageway, alongside signed passing places, will be installed this coming Summer, starting with the priority areas around the main and middle car parks.
- Review of middle car park closure trial period at end of peak season 2021.
- Other traffic calming measures are being looked into.

#### Notification of plans for cattle grids

- We plan to carry out repair works to the cattle grid nearest to the main car park to fix broken weld sites, with thanks to Councillor Joanna Spicer for assistance on funding with this.
- We plan to install sound dampeners on all four cattle grids.
- We are awaiting confirmation for a temporary road closure to carry out the works as soon as possible.

We will endeavour to update the parish council at each major stage of the above projects. Please don't hesitate to get in contact with any questions on the below contact details:





	Samantha Norris 07717 156601 knettishall@suffolkwildlifetrust.org or David Stansfeld 07721111831 david.stansfeld@suffolkwildlifetrust.org	
4.	The draft minutes of the last meeting (8 <sup>th</sup> March) had been pre-circulated; were taken as read and approved.	
5.	Previous actions were reviewed and are completed or covered on the agenda. LM is carrying forward actions - Anglian Water pumping station – Cllr Macklin had not been able to contact anyone but will continue to chase this. LM to report the break up of pavements on Nethergate Street.	LM
6.	As it has been Easter holidays there was no update from the school. Update from Su Delve – the Police Volunteer roles have been restarted today. She will be out and about in the village for people to talk to and ask advice.	
7.	Hopton South Development – No update. b DC/21/0633/TCA this was supported by the Parish Council. c DC/21/0608/HH this was supported by the Parish Council.	RS
8.	County Councillor Joanna Spicer gave the following update – Boardwalk repairs are due to take place. There had been correspondence from a resident about speeding on the High Street. Its an ongoing problem as it's a link road. She recommended Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (VAS) be considered. There is one on the High Street, near the start of Common Road. There was a community speedwatch group some years ago and Cllr Faiers has the equipment. There was some discussion about this and it was agreed Cllrs Macklin & Shotbolt would discuss how this could be taken forward. It is thought there is a moveable sign and a pole near the village hall. Once things are clearer then the school could be approached to be involved as they have been in the past. The Clerk will respond to the resident who raised this with an update and ask if they would consider being involved. District Cllr Carol Bull reported that a large amount of recycling is contaminated as the right things are not being out in the blue bins. The Local Plan consultation had a record number of responses.	LM/BS  RS
9.	Currently from May 7 <sup>th</sup> Parish Councils cannot meet remotely but also cannot meet in person until the 17 <sup>th</sup> May under the lockdown rules. The Parish Council has been advised by the Village Hall Committee that they cannot use the Village Hall due to the preschool using the building. High Street Chapel have agreed, subject to a risk assessment, that the Parish Council can use their building. It was agreed to request that the May meeting takes place at High Street Chapel and to provisionally book it for the June and July meetings too. This led to a discussion about the use of the village hall generally. The village hall development under the Hopton South development scheme will give more flexible spaces but is dependent on the development starting. There does need to be	RS






	<p>wider use of the Hall which will be looked at further when the COVID restrictions are eased.</p> <p>It was agreed the Zoom subscription would be cancelled this month.</p> <p>Cllr Shotbolt volunteered to investigate if there were options for remote access to in person meetings in the future using Zoom or Microsoft Teams.</p>	<p>RS</p> <p>BS</p>																				
10.	<p>Healing Woodland – Cllr Hanks had met with Suffolk County Council, no decision on funding will be made until the end of May. Cllr Hanks is meeting the Woodland &amp; Trees Officer this Friday. Two litter picking parties have been arranged on 25/4 and 8/5. A risk assessment will be carried out for these. Cllr Bull advised West Suffolk would provide heavy duty rubbish bags, litter picker grippers etc. They will also collect the rubbish after its been collected. There is a dedicated email address for the Healing wood project and it is proposed that a dedicated website is set up on the natural history of the village. It is possible there maybe to be metal and/or concrete but this will be assessed once the first clearance has been done.</p> <p>Crooke’s Corner update – Su Delve advised the slabs that have been donated for this are the wrong size and would involve a redesign so can’t be used. New slabs, sand and concrete need to be ordered and there are delays on these.</p>																					
11a.	<p>Clerks Report.</p> <p>i Bank Balances at 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021:  Community Current Account: £10108.53  Business Premium Account (savings): £45566.76</p> <p><b>2020/21</b>  £9199.70 Income received is 112.19% of expected income budget (£8200)  £8029.18 Expenditure is 101% of expected expenditure budget (£8675.34)</p> <p>Payment Schedule for April had been pre-circulated and agreed by email. This included the following payments –</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zoom for April</td> <td>14.39</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Salter Salary</td> <td>267.18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Waugh Salary</td> <td>133.65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vertas</td> <td>453.10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SALC Payroll</td> <td>70.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC</td> <td>37.80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R Salter Office Allowance</td> <td>50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Income in March</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>VAT Reclaim</td> <td>516.70</td> </tr> </table> <p>ii The Internal Control Statement was unanimously agreed.  iii West Suffolk Council has advised the Parish Council now has to pay for the garden waste to be collected from the cemetery. £43. There was some discussion but it was agreed this should be paid and review next year.</p>	Expenditure		Zoom for April	14.39	R Salter Salary	267.18	R Waugh Salary	133.65	Vertas	453.10	SALC Payroll	70.20	HMRC	37.80	R Salter Office Allowance	50.00	Income in March		VAT Reclaim	516.70	<p>RS</p>
Expenditure																						
Zoom for April	14.39																					
R Salter Salary	267.18																					
R Waugh Salary	133.65																					
Vertas	453.10																					
SALC Payroll	70.20																					
HMRC	37.80																					
R Salter Office Allowance	50.00																					
Income in March																						
VAT Reclaim	516.70																					






11b.	Chairs Report. The postbox for the cemetery had not progressed further.	
11c.	Councillors Reports. Cllr Faiers advised the village hall lawnmower was working again. Cllr Shotbolt raised the possibility of doing a video of the village which was received positively. It was agreed it was a way to capture the natural history of the village particularly areas like the Healing Woodland as work begins there. This ties in with work that Cllr Hanks is co-ordinating with others in the village.	
12.	Date of next Parish Council Meeting Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2021. The meeting closed at 21:00.	

39 L Macklin Chair

*L Macklin*

R Salter Clerk

*R Salter*