**Acle Parish Council**

**Clerk’s report for Parish Council meeting on 13th December 2021**

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| **1.** | **Clerk’s Report - Matters Arising from the Meeting of 29th November:** |
| 1.1 | **Acle Foodbank** We have been successful in obtaining food vouchers for the people currently being supported by the foodbank. Sally Aldridge is putting together Christmas parcels with food and little presents. We have two new households since the last meeting. |
| 1.2 | **Acle’s Beeline** I’ve been in touch with Garden Guardian about the messy weedkilling around street furniture.  His reply was:  *We will try to keep the weedkilling to a minimum next year.*  *HAVS is based on the vibration levels for each machine and a combination of all machines used during the day. You could strim for about 4 hrs before reaching the limit for vibrations each day then have to stop work and go home. A ride on mower you can use for about 8 + Hrs before stopping work depending on the machine. I work on the combination of a maximum 2 hrs strimming and 6 hrs on the mower as a rough guide. This brings the total vibration to the maximum level before hitting the red zone on the HSE graph. This combination puts us in the action area for vibration control which is regular breaks, swapping between machines etc. It is a fine balance and at all times it is an obligation to keep all vibrations to a minimum. The older the machinery the more vibrations and the less time you are allowed to use it. I try to keep all the machinery as new as possible and using commercial equipment also helps.*  *The problem with our job is we use machinery all day every day and the trick is to make the best use of every day without causing harm to ourselves. There is still always a lot of strimming which has to be carried out, and weedkilling only reduces that amount. It is strimming which causes the maximum amount of vibration in a working day. Weedkilling helps me meet my HSE obligations whilst still being able to complete a full days work.* |
| 1.3 | **Rent for land at Primary School for Fletcher Room** Norfolk Property Services (agents for Norfolk County Council) have come back with examples of leases they have with army cadets on school land where they charge even more than they are proposing to charge us for the Fletcher Room. He said that they might accept to continue with the ground rent at £350pa if the building were to be used by the Pre-School, rather than anyone else, but only in the short-term, expecting the Pre-School to move out in a while.  They have confirmed that, if we were to ask to extend the lease, then they would extend it so that, at that point, we had 25 years to run so, with it currently due to run out on 14th May 2026, we have 4 and a bit years left to run. If, for example, we extend it before May 2022, it would be extended for a further 21 years so it would run out in 2047, ie in 25 years’ time. |
| **2** | **Correspondence Received:** |
| 2.1 | NCC got in touch about a scheme whereby they would work with three parishes to reduce **flood risk**.  *From this initial community engagement, we hope to engage with yourselves in order to determine the suitability of sites and the potential to deliver holistic water management. This will enable us to identify and ultimately focus on at least three communities in each county, where the projects will be developed into a Business Case with support from partners.*    *Once communities and their catchments have been selected, the scheme would seek to:*     * *Reduce flood risk to the community using catchment based Natural Flood Management and retrofitting sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) or other similar appropriate measures;* * *Reuse surface water runoff through the installation of water capture and reuse measures for use by agriculture, industry, or the local community facilities to improve water security;* * *Engage closely with local communities to benefit from their local knowledge, rebuild trust in Risk Management Authorities and to initiate changing a communities’ perspective to flood risk management;* * *Maximise additional multi-purpose benefits for the environment and society, and;* * *Provide evidence of the effectiveness and cost of holistic water management projects in rural towns and villages through ongoing monitoring.* |
| 3 | **Planning: (Agenda item 5)** |
| 3.1 | There are no new applications. |
| 3.2 | **Land North of Damgate** **Lane** – 4 self-build dwellings (outline) (20212094). The agent has been in touch with some comments about the front hedge, having read that Acle PC had some concerns about the hedge. He has offered to have a condition that protects the remainder of the hedge. He sent photos that suggest that there was no hedge there in 1940s or 1960s. |
| 4 | **Finance Report: (agenda item 6)**  On the website. |
| 5 | **Recreation Centre: (agenda item 7)** For those of you who were not at the last meeting, the Rec Centrehave been successful in being awarded a grant for 30% towards the installation of **solar panels** on the roof. The total cost is currently £63,200. The grant is for £22,752. They had asked in the past if the PC might give a contribution and we have £20,000 in the current year’s budget for this purpose, following a decision to support this scheme, in principle, back in November 2020. At the last meeting they asked for £30,000 from Acle PC. Since Jackie and Barry had to declare a pecuniary interest, as trustees, that only left four councillors to make this decision. So it was deferred until the December meeting. |
| 6 | **Chocolate Box and Barclays: (agenda items 8 and 9)**  The proposed refurbishment projects will be discussed at the meeting. |
| 7 | **New Cemetery: (agenda item 10)**  We hope to proceed with the purchase shortly.  The proposal in the budget is not to do the refurbishment of the track to the new cemetery straight away and to defer it by a year or so, to wait to see how much money the council has left after the other projects. It is proposed therefore just to sow the grass-seed, put in the post and wire fence, and plant the hedging, so that it begins to look like a cemetery. |
| 8 | **Men’s Shed: (agenda item 11)**  After the last meeting, I asked Barry Brooks to email round the Trustees to ask them if they would permit two modular buildings on the land in front of the Indoor Bowls centre. I have just heard that they have agreed this, subject to:  *1. We do not lose any car parking spaces,*  *2. It must not impinge on the installation or maintenance of the solar*  *panels on the bowls club roof.*  *3. That they are decorated/ painted to fit in with the indoor bowls building*  *4. The Recreation Centre Trustees retain the right to have the*  *portacabins removed if any unforeseen problems arise (eg Health &*  *Safety, security, antisocial behaviour).*  I understand that the Men’s Shed have also just received their Registered Charity status, which is good news for grants etc. |
| 9 | **Highways: (agenda item 12)** |
| 9.1 | **Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign:** Jamie can give a report. |
| 9.2 | **Parking scheme:**  We hope this will be done in the new year. |
| 9.3 | I had a request from a resident for a new **grit bin** at the junction of Englands Road and South Walsham Road. They cost about £100 for bin, and fitting (putting on some slabs) and then we have to keep it topped up with grit. |
| 9.4 | I’ve had the drawings for the new footway at the top of **Mill Lane** – part of the planning conditions for the Lovell site, for information only, as they are consulting with the neighbours. |
| 9.5 | I’ve had the formal consultation on the introduction of a 40mph speed limit on **Leffins Lane**. I’ve advertised this on our website, and had a call from the Yarmouth Mercury about it. |
| 10 | **Acle Society tri-fold leaflet and Acle News (agenda item 13)** |
|  | I understand that Acle Society does not have enough volunteers to deliver the newsletter around the village, and it is planned instead to have 600 copies of Acle News printed, with the village directory on the back page, and then have these available at village businesses for people to pick up, and we can put it online, of course. |
| 11 | **Budget and Precept (agenda item 14)** The working party is proposing an increase in the precept of 7.57%. However, because there are more houses in the village now, to share out the cost of the precept, this represents an increase of only 1.4% per average Band D home. The total cost per Band D home will be £120 pa, which is obviously £10 per month, or 32.8 pence per day. This increase in precept generates £8,682.  Given these changes, and the proposed precept of £123,360, the expected total funds available to the PC at 31.3.2023 are £877,966, which shows the maximum amount available to spend on the Barclays and Chocolate Box refurbishments. |
| 12 | **Events: (agenda item 15)**  Angela Bishop will report on the recent Christmas event and the Jubilee events. |
| 13 | **Deputy Clerk and Assets Manager** Becky Furr has started working a few hours a week for us. She will start work at the full 21 hours after Christmas. Becky has taken on the regular checking of the empty buildings, the play areas and the public toilets, and has been reviewing our policies for any gaps. She will work on updating our risk assessments next week. |
| 14 | **Any Other Business:** |
| 14.1 | PC Steve Godden has been appointed for this area, to assist PC Jackie Chambers. He will be out and about in the area shortly. I attended the recent police public meeting, online. They reported low rates of crime in the area. Their priority for the next few months remains monitoring speeding. They were aware of the figures for speeding that Jamie Pizey submits.  Obviously people working from home does reduce the risk of burglary… Residents are reminded to put lights on timers in the winter. |
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|  | Pauline James – 13th December 2021 |