**Acle Parish Council**

**Clerks’ report for Parish Council meeting on 26th September 2022**

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| **1.** | **Clerks’ Report - Matters Arising from the Meetings of 18th July and 8th August (Agenda item 4)** |
| 1.1 | **PJ - Acle & District Men’s Shed:**  The Men’s Shed members continue to work on the sheds. New workbenches have been constructed. New openings were made in the rear of the buildings and donated windows have been fitted. Grilles from the former Barclays building have been fitted to the windows to increase security. |
| 1.2 | **PJ** – **Resource Base at Acle Academy**  Acle Academy would like to add a 25 place Autistic Spectrum Disorder Specialist  Resource Base (ASD SRB) from 1 April 2025. They are just consulting on the idea at present, and would appreciate the Council’s support in principle. There is an open event at the Academy on Tuesday between 5 and 6pm, open to all. |
| 1.3 | **FR – Lease of land at Fletcher Room**  Norfolk CC have increased the ground rent for the land from £350pa to £2,640pa.  NCC are supposed to review their rates every 5 years, they missed the opportunity to raise on one occasion and subsequently tried to raise the rent a few years ago which the Pauline challenged and managed to get the rates to remain at £350. Unfortunately, this year they have decided to proceed with the increases.  I met with Chairman of the Preschool Committee and discussed the substantial rise in the NCC Ground Rent. Pauline proposed, in the short term, that the rental for the building is increased from £14.50 to £16.50 per day, starting after the October half-term 2022. There may have to be further rises in the future to cover the increase by NCC. The Preschool Committee have agreed the temporary increase and are aware it may need to be increased once again, possibly by next Term.  Infinity Norse came and did the Legionella remedial works at the Fletcher Room. I will arrange for Infinity to return to re-do the Risk Assessment.  I have sourced a local handyman to come and repair broken gutter, door trim, ceiling trim and dropped window, awaiting quote.  The Emergency Exit gate to the rear of the grassed area does not close, I have asked Prestige Fencing to quote for a repair.  For information, Tanya Mallett has handed in her resignation, Hannah Catchpole who is already a member of staff at the Pre-School will take over as Acting Setting Manager. Tanya Mallet will remain on the Pre-School Committee. |
| 1.4 | **PJ – Works in Damgate Wood**  You will remember that Acle Lands Trust asked APC to pay for, or part-pay for, works to clear the dyke in Damgate Wood, including the hire of an excavator.  I’ve paid the invoice, £1,670.25 + VAT, as the contractor needed paying. Adam reported that “the cost was higher than originally thought partially due to the contractor undertaking the chainsaw/tree clearing work that ALT Volunteers were going to do, but personal commitments meant that the volunteers didn't have time to do it as the contractor had a cancellation and arrived a month earlier than originally planned.  Also the work did need to be done on mats due to it being very soft (one of the workers actually ended up going in waist deep and had to be pulled clear with the machine).  The dyke is now fully cleared from Colmans Drain up to and around the gardens of No. 1 and No. 3 Damgate Lane and has now opened up a clearly defined boundary.  ALT will be putting in a drainage pipe (provided by contractor) from the edge of the concrete road and into the drain, and also installing a fence to keep members of the public out of the area.  Mr Dhesi, has had a similar invoice for the 6 days and tree work etc done on his land.  (the delivery/collection charge has been split 50/50).” |
| 1.5 | **FR** – **Play Areas:**  **Springfield Park** – Prestige Fencing have replaced the fencing panel where the bars had been bent, (suspected that it was hit by a vehicle). The sheared-off gate bracket also appears to have been fixed by them as well.  **Damgate Park** – Prestige Fencing erected the bow topped fence around the Adult Gym Equipment and George Taylor has fixed the “Use of Adult Gym Equipment” sign to the fence. *Are there any willing Councillors able to come and have a photo taken with the Lottery Grant cheque?*  The Table Tennis table has now been assembled and fixed to a concrete base. We are expecting a 50% refund of the installation cost from Sportsafe, who charged for “Assembly and Fixing” but only assembled the table, George Taylor ended up doing the works for the fixing.  It has been noted that the Adult Gym Equipment and Table Tennis has been used on a number of occasions by members of the public.  Fairhaven Primary School have advised that the Basket Swing will be removed from the South Walsham play area some time in October. The build at Fairhaven is due to be finished before the half term so we should expect the swing before then. I will be attending a Play Area Training Session on Wednesday 28th September so I will find out what needs to be done in terms of safety surfacing for the swing at Damgate. |
| 1.6 | **FR – Assets:**  I have spoken with the owners of the Post Office and they are happy for the new APC bench to be installed on the shingled/stoned area in front of the Post Box and behind the white bollards. I shall ask George Taylor to fit this.  The map boards at the Recreation Centre and Acle Bridge are badly cracked and fogged with age, I am trying to source replacement Polycarbonate covers. Barry Coveley is seeing if he can replace, if he cannot easily do this the map boards will need to be replaced completely. The village map has been printed on waterproof paper and will be fitted in these map boards. The map board at the railway station has been removed, presumably by Network Rail/ Greater Anglia when the car park was changed to pay-to-park. |
| 1.5 | **FR – Public Toilets:**  BDC are reviewing all the Public Toilets in their district with the view to renovate the ones most in need, Acle is yet to be seen but will be looked at shortly. I have been updating BDC with a list of remedial works required. This includes broken toilet in Ladies, hand dryer not working in Disabled, loose baby change table in Disabled, broken flush in Gents, graffiti in Gents, loose toilet seat in the Gents, both Gents and Ladies external doors badly damaged.  PJ – we are still waiting for BDC to pay us the agency fee for managing the toilets. They asked us to invoice them this year, for the first time, which I did on 1st September, so I shall chase them up for the money if it has not arrived by the end of the month. |
| 1.6 | **FR – Flats:** There have been two complaints received about the Barclays build from the Tenants, these have been reported to the Builders who have put mitigations in place.  Tenants have been informed of the fire precautions whilst the Barclays build is taking place. The Building Contractors have a need to turn the Fire Alarm off whilst working, they have purchased an “Fire Bell” to use in the event of a fire this will be loud enough for the tenants to hear and evacuate, when the Builders leave in the evening they will ensure the Fire Alarms are put back on.  Flat 42 – Broken washing machine has now been fixed. I am sourcing a new oven hob and installer as the gas ignition has broken, I have been advised it would be more beneficial to replace the lot rather than fix the current hob. Pauline and I have both asked the tenants to remove the unwanted exercise equipment that they have left in the lobby area.  Flat 44 – Barry Coveley kindly has repaired the windows which were not closing properly.  PJ – flat 44 is being re-decorated.  FR - The new tenant in 44 has requested with Anglian Water for a meter to be installed.  The stairs up to the flats were painted during August and look great. |
| 1.7 | **FR - Current Cemetery:** George Taylor will be sanding and re-treating the damaged bench at the old cemetery. Abbey Memorials will be coming to do a Memorial Inspection on Thursday 6th October – this is done every few years to ensure the safety of the public. |
| 1.8 | **FR – Street furniture:** Deputy Clerk has contacted NCC about the installation of Finger Posts and map board on The Green, and the bollards on New Road, to see if there are any utilities running underneath the proposed areas. They have agreed to carry out a search of the maps for the areas. |
| 1.9 | **FR – Speed Signs:** I am obtaining quotes for the primary school children’s designs for speed signs for the village. |
| 1.10 | **FR – Graffiti:** There have been a number of incidents of graffiti appearing in the Village, the Police are investigating. I have asked the Youth Justice Service if they would be interested in getting the young offenders to remove the graffiti. |
| 1.11 | **FR – Rats at the Rec Centre:**  Following a report of rats at the Rec Centre car park, I got in touch with the Medical Centre and the Rec Centre. |
| **2** | **Correspondence Received and Meetings Attended:** |
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| 2.1 | **FR – Defibrillator:** A note has been received to say APC needs to check if there is a product recall on our Defibrillator. I’ve asked the gentlemen who maintains the Defibrillator to check this for the Parish. |
| 2.2 | **PJ – Police Safer Neighbourhood Area meeting:** I attended this on Zoom. Acle area:  1 x theft of car - Land Rovers can be taken without the key 4 x violence - all domestic  Increase in anti-social behaviour over the summer One family spoken to several times and letters sent Met with YMCA and youth club - poor turnout over the summer but hopes to increase numbers when school is back Will now do more speed checks and checking on parking outside schools  I thanked them for handing out the prizes for the speeding signs competition |
| 2.3 | **PJ - Acle Academy – Sports Hall:** The Wensum Trust thanked APC for the support for the proposal for a Community Sports Hall. They did confirm that they “would not want to deliver this at the detriment of any existing provisions including the Rec Centre. We want to work with all stakeholders..” |
| 2.4 | **PJ -Elections 2023:** It is expected that there will be district and parish level elections on Thursday, 4th May 2023. |
| 2.5 | **PJ - Deposit under s31(6) of the Highways Act 1980:** We’ve received notification of a deposit for land in Tunstall. My understanding of this process is that landowners make a deposit to firm up the public footpaths on their land and to say that there will be no new paths. |
| 2.6 | **PJ - PCN Enhanced Recovery Worker:** We had an email from a Primary Care Network Enhanced Recovery Worker for MIND. The role is linked to GP surgeries. I emailed back in a generally supportive manner, but it seems that they have found accommodation with some surgeries, including Acle. |
| 2.7 | **PJ - Pay rises:** The National Employers have made a final offer to the unions, for local government employees of and increase of £1 per hour, across all pay scales. |
| 3 | **PJ - Planning: (Agenda item 5)** |
| 3.1 | There are several applications for tree works:   1. **8 & 12 Oxcroft** – 1 x cherry and 2 x hornbeams – raise branches to no higher than top of fence (2m0 and reduce eastern branches back from an overhand of 4m to 2m (20221271) 2. **11 Orchard Close** – T1, T2 & T3 pine – thin canopy by 30% to reduce pigeon fouling, needle dropping and shading pine (20221307) 3. **49 South Walsham Road** – T1 Beech – approx. 16m in height, Crown lift to 3.5m over property garden and grass verge. Reduce epicormic growth up to 4m. Crown lift over highway up to 5m if required. Reduce low limb growing towards entrance of property to provide adequate visibility when exiting drive (20221389)  We are not technically consulted on these so take a look at the applications on the BDC website and let me know if you have any concerns. |
| 3.2 | **Beaconsfield House** – change of use to children’s home (20221126) No more information has been given on this. |
| 3.3 | **Telecoms mast at Hugh Crane Cleaning:** This is a pre-application consultation to gauge feelings about the removal of the existing 15m telecoms monopole, and installing a 20m monopole, to improve 4G and get ready for 5G. |
| 3.4 | BDC has confirmed that the wooden structure in the back of Gentleman Jacks will require planning permission. |
| 4 | **PJ - Finance Report: (Agenda item 6)** The list of receipts and payments since the last meeting is posted with the agenda. |
| 5.1 | **PJ – Recreation Centre: (Agenda item 7)**  NCC needs APC, as owners of the Rec Centre site, to confirm that you give permission for the electric vehicle charging points. |
| 5.2 | The Trustees want to ask you about using some S106 monies for works at the outdoor **bowls club**, including an irrigation pump. I’ve sent and email to BDC to check that this could be funded by s106 money. |
| 5.3 | Acle United **Youth Football** club have asked if you would ask BDC to allocate s.106 monies for two sets of wheeled goals, costing £5,621. BDC have confirmed that this spend is acceptable. |
| 6 | **Chocolate Box and The Brian Grint Centre: (Agenda item 8)**  PJ - There have been two site meetings since our last APC meeting, 30th August attended by Jamie, Barry, me and Fiona, and 13th September attended by Angela, Jamie. Tony, Barry, Fiona and me..  Important items to note:   * Additional asbestos was found and had to be removed * Damp was found all the way up the ground floor walls so additional works were approved by the working party (our survey did find the property to be damp when we bought it) * Louisa preferred not to have the new link to the outside toilet as that would have meant losing wall space in the till area, as a new door was to be put in * Louisa was asked to clear out the sheds in the rear yard * Do you want blinds fitting to the windows? * I took out additional insurance for the project   Will Trowse gave us the **JCT contract** at the last site meeting.  Site is now a building site and PPE must be worn on site |
| 7.1 | **Barclays: (Agenda item 9)**  The site meetings above also included the Barclays building.  Issues to consider are:   * Flooring – see note below * Vault – need to agree treatment of main vault door – cost neutral to remove it as scrap cost cancels out work to remove it, or £1,000 to make a feature of it by fixing it to floor and wall in alcove in unit 2 * Fire doors were agreed * Air conditioning units have been re-conditioned and will be reused, saving lots of money on heating installation costs * Black or white fascia? – gutters will be black * Bin sheds? Style? Shed for bins for flats and for units? * I took out additional insurance for the project as it was unclear if the building works were insured by the builders   Will Trowse gave us the **JCT contract** at the last site meeting.  Site is now a building site and PPE must be worn on site.  **Estate agents:**  Barry and I met **Dan Bycroft.** He has quoted:  £1,250 per letting for units 1 & 2 and £750 per letting for units 3 & 4  They can manage the units for 7.5% of annual rent.  He has suggested **rents** of:  Unit 1 £11,500pa (£958.33 per month)  Unit 2 £10,000pa (£833.33 per month)  Unit 3 £6,500pa (£541.66 per month)  Unit 4 £4,250pa (£354.17 per month)  This seems to work out at £18/sqft, whereas Brown & Co were suggesting £25/sqft. (Worked out on Zone A usable space, which does not include loos, kitchens etc.)  John Mansfield, surveyor from Brown and Co:  Unit 1 £16,000pa (£1,333 per month)  Unit 2 £11,500pa (£958.33 per month)  Unit 3 £12,000pa (£1,000 per month)  Unit 4 (office) £5,000pa (£416.66 per month)  Unit 3 & 4 Combined £13,500pa (£1,125.00 per month)  Dan Bycroft believes that all the units will fall below the rateable value of £12,000, which means that no rates would be payable by the tenants.  He suggested that it would be good to have one local artisanal tenant, one small national tenant and one good quality local business, with unit 4 perhaps being for a physiotherapist etc.  Angela, Barry, Fiona and I met with Guy Gowing from **Arnolds Keys**. He said he would be in touch before Monday’s meeting with costs to market the units.  I have booked Brown & Co (estate agent side) to see the site on 10th October. |
|  | FR - The outside area to Barclays has become overgrown with **weeds** and is looking very unkept. I am finding contractors to quote. The areas to the side of the building especially will need constant maintenance unless measures are put in place to mitigate the weeds returning. A suggestion being that current flower beds are levelled, as the earth in much higher than the flower bed wall, then a membrane and woodchip laid with shrubs planted.  To the back of Barclays there is currently another flower bed which has become overgrown with weeds and the grassed area, could these areas become **extra parking** for the village and retail units. This would be a benefit to the local area as there is a need for extra parking and also it will reduce gardening maintenance costs as these areas would no longer be a concern.  I have emailed Economic Development at BDC to see if they have any suggestions for business tenants for the building.  PJ - Jamie asked if you might consider installing a **bike repair post**. |
|  | **PJ - VAT advice:**  Jerry Dale of Elysian Associates will advise the Council on the VAT implications for the buildings. |
| 8 | **PJ New Cemetery: (Agenda item 10)**  I emailed you all after I met with the surveying company at the cemetery, but I shall repeat most of it here, for completeness. He found that the new fence is not in line with the boundary and that we had lost some land, compared with the conveyance map.  I phoned Nicholas Crane and he met me there with the surveyor. The surveyor has put in markers (and sprayed paint crosses) where the fence should be. Nicholas is happy with the markers.  Nicholas will then prepare and seed the land in the Autumn and then we can get the hedge planted.  FR - Bure Valley Conservation Group have asked if they can come assist with planting the **hedges** at the new cemetery site on 7th December, this might be the only date they can do for a while. |
| 9 | **Acle Allotment Association (Agenda item 11)** It’s coming up to time to renew the lease of the allotments land to the AAA. |
| 10 | **Highways (Agenda item 12)** |
| 10.1 | **FR - Bollards in New Road:** nothing more to reportat present. |
| 10.2 | **Mobile Vehicle Activated Sign:** Jamie can give a report. |
| 11 | **Events: (Agenda item 13)**  Time to consider Christmas trees, lighting and carol concerts? |
| 12 | **PJ - Warm Places and Support for Local Residents (Agenda item 14)**  Wendy asked for this to be raised. As it happens, I received an email from Nfk Ass’n of Local Councils today about what Mundesley has done, paying for refreshments at local churches etc. |
| 13 | PJ - We have to renew our **Training Policy (Agenda item 15)** The councillors are asked to add your skills relevant to parish council work to the training and skills matrix.  FR – I have attended **Legionella Training** and am scheduled to attend the Play Areas Training on the 28th September, and am booked on to Memorial training but date to be confirmed. |
| 14 | **PJ - Dignity at Work and Civility & Respect (Agenda item 16):** This is a national initiative. They are asking all councils to sign up to this. |
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|  | Pauline James and Fiona Richardson – 22nd September 2022 |