**Acle Parish Council**

**Clerks’ report for Parish Council meeting on 31st July 2023**

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| **1.** | **Matters Arising from the Meeting of 26th June (Agenda item 4)** |
| 1.1 | **New Cemetery (4.1): KS – Water:**  Continuing with the plans to put in water. Mills & Reeve are looking into possible legal agreements with the neighbours, and I am chasing Anglian Water each week to see if they would agree, then it will be on Orchard Cottage owners to agree and then get quotes for physical work.  PJ – we were just chatting about this and wondering if it might be possible to sink a bore hole at the new cemetery and have an old-fashioned, manual pump.  **KS – Turning:**  I am continuing to work out the best way for a hearse to turn on the site, and have liaised with local funeral directors to find out the size of hearses.  **Current Cemetery** PJ – We will arrange to have removed the soil left over from burials and the vegetation from the field side, and cut off some low branches from the trees, this will create more room for burials.  A resident got in touch to suggest that we consider allowing memorial plaques to be fixed to the cemetery wall. |
| 1.2 | **Fletcher Room and Pre-School (4.2):** PJ – I met with 4 members of the Pre-School committee this week. As raised at the May meeting, they would really like it if we were in a position to put a new building in place this time next year, ie during the school summer holidays. They believe that, if they move the sheds, then a larger building could be fitted in the existing land that we lease from NCC, rather than having to apply for an increased plot of land, which would be complicated. They have sent a drawing showing how they propose to lay out the land to the right hand side of the building.  They have also sent a report of our meeting this week.  They would prefer a building with two rooms, with a smaller room for younger children. I said that, when we discussed this before, the councillors had felt that one room should be available for other residents to hire, out of pre-school hours, so they would need to be able to tidy away at the end of the school day. They were happy with this idea.  I have suggested that they work out how much it costs them to run, per day, so that we can work out if they can afford to increase the rent they pay to Acle Borderland Trust.  They have been successful in obtaining a grant towards improving the outside space.  **KS** - **AC service** completed 27th July.  **KS** - Works to lift & level approx 15-20 **paving slabs** to take place over the summer holidays, subject to decision on safer surfacing instead of paving. |
| 1.3 | **PJ - Plastic-Free Communities (4.3)** To consider getting some long-life bags made with our tree symbol and APC printed on. |
| 1.3 | **PJ –** **Flooding at Beighton Road:** BDC have struggled to find a date that everyone can attend, for an update meeting, and the next meeting is booked for the morning of 11th August. BDC have given an update, “*Steve Halls has advised two site visits have now taken place, the most recent a GPS survey completed 30 June to establish levels in the area.  Steve is now waiting for the results of the survey from the partner organisation (Broads IDB) to be able to review the findings.”*  I purchased a short water-activated flood barrier for each household that is affected and delivered one to each house. I noticed when I was there that there was a pallet of sand-bags standing ready for use. There were quite a lot of weeds in the ditch, so I have reported that to Clarion, who said that they would maintain the ditch for now, even though they don’t think it is their ditch.  I contacted Simon Faraday-Drake, resilience officer at BDC, and he gave me the link to a site called FloodMary.com, where I found some useful advice for residents affected by flooding, so I copied that and delivered it to the households. |
| 1.4 | **PJ - Youth club:** Jackie Clover has received some updates from the YMCA. |
| 1.5 | **PJ - Bus Shelters and Bus Stops:** Norfolk County Council have installed new bus stops with new kerbs on New Road, Norwich Road and the A47 sliproads.  I received the following from NCC re the bus stop at FTH:  *Just a courtesy email to inform you that the ‘Gold’ standard bus stop in Acle has been allocated a design engineer to move the project forward.*    *I attended a Gateway meeting this morning to discuss the scheme and surveys are planned imminently to allow designs to be drafted.  I reiterated the key objective in making the stop more accessible for bus passengers and improving the footway on the southbound side of The Street.* |
| 1.6 | **PJ** – The Acle & District Men’s Shed and the Acle Allotment Association’s Open Days both went off well. |
| 1.7 | **KS** - Speed signs - agreed locations, will be installed by Rick Goodley. |
| 1.8 | **KS - New Road Parking** – Street Furniture Licence application for the bollards along New Road hasn’t been responded to yet by NCC., nor for the application for the finger post or the Acle Society bench on SW Road. |
| 1.9 | **PJ** - Network Rail, or Greater Anglia, are installing new **LED lights** along both footpaths to the station. |
| 1.10 | **FR - Public Toilets:**  I reported the recent vandalism to the local Police.  I have requested that a local window fitter replace the broken safety glass in the gents and ladies’ toilets. |
| 1.11 | **PJ - Councillors’ updates:** The clerks will offer appointments for councillors to answer questions about Council matters, in between monthly meetings. |
| 1.12 | **PJ – communications:** We have set up a Google group for the three clerks so that you can email [Acleclerks@googlegroups.com](mailto:Acleclerks@googlegroups.com) and it will go to all three of us. We can then reply, copying in the same email, and we will all see the responses. This will be particularly useful for periods of annual leave as we can put this email address on our Out of Office and residents will be able to contact the other two members of staff in one email.   Fiona is going to draft a Who Does What leaflet to be delivered in the village, setting out what APC does, and what NCC and BDC do, and the Rec Centre, and ALT and ABT etc., with contact details to report potholes etc.  We will set up some FAQs on the website, explaining about how to access the services provided by Norfolk County Council and Broadland District Council, for example. |
| 2 | **Correspondence Received and Meetings Attended:** |
| 2.1 | **PJ** – I attended a short, free, online training session on cyber security. |
| 2.2 | **PJ** – NCC are going to re-start the Postwick part and ride:  *Following a passionate plea from residents and parishes asking for the re-opening of the Postwick P&R service, giving us confidence that people will use the service, we have decided to re-open the site and service from Monday 4th September on a trial basis (at least 4 months until Christmas and then to be reviewed) to see how real the demand is. A press release will be issued shortly (attached for information) and a marketing plan will be drawn up to fully publicise not just the Postwick service but also the services from the other sites, as passenger numbers continue to be much lower than pre-pandemic levels (currently only about 45%). So we will need to really get the parishes and public on board and anything you can do to help with this will be greatly appreciated.*    *This also follows a relaxation of the DfT’s rules around the use of the Bus Service Improvement Plan funding, which previously could not be used for supporting services that were run, pre-pandemic, as a commercial service. However the BSIP funding is limited so we do need the passenger numbers to pick up across all the sites, hence the reason for the trial period.*    *I hope that this is welcome news and we look forward to seeing you on board. Discounted fares are also planned for September onwards, more details to follow once the detail has been worked up.* |
| 2.3 | **PJ - Declaring a Climate Emergency:** Parish councils are being encouraged to declare a Climate Emergency. I have started looking at other town and parish council’s websites to see what kind of thing they have posted and we can have this on the agenda for the September meeting. Please give it some thought and let me know if you would like to be on the working party. |
| 2.4 | **FR – Footpaths:**  I had seen on Social Media some complaints about the footpaths in and around Acle in general. It appeared that the public had already reported them to NCC and were not satisfied with the outcome, I have reported this to County Councillor Lana Hempsall.  **PJ** – I received a complaint about the tall weeds on the **footway** between Cardington Court and De Carle Smith Road. This is the responsibility of NCC so I have reported it to them. |
| 2.5 | **MP Jerome Mayhew** is visiting Acle on Tuesday, 29th August from 11.00 to 11.45, at the car park at Swallowtail Place. |
| 2.6 | **PJ** - At our last meeting, a resident raised the question of **travel to and from Acle out of hours**, and I said I would look up something I remembered for young people being able to rent scooters to enable them to get to work but, sadly, this scheme has ended. I have let the resident know. |
| 2.7 | **PJ** - BDC approved the use of S106 monies for the new **LED lights for the tennis** courts so I have told the Tennis Club. BDC have also approved the use of S106 funds for the new mower to cut the grass slopes around the pitches at the Rec Centre. |
| 2.8 | **PJ** - I attended an event at the current **Crocus site in Leffins Lane**. They were welcoming in the last tenant and it all looked very nice. They have just to complete the path that links to the railway footpath. |
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| 3 | **PJ - Planning: (Agenda item 5)** |
| 3.1 | **New applications:** i) **Acle Dental Surgery** – internal and external alterations 2023/1827  ii) **25 Old Market Close** - proposed single storey rear extension. Construction of detached outbuilding 2023/1848  iii) **Acle Academy** – multi-use sports area 2023/1758 |
| 3.2 | **BDC’s Decisions:** i) **The Enchanted Florist** – refusal, contrary to planning policies  ii) **M & L Hempsall, Southacre, Sth Walsham Road** – building for gym – approval, with restriction that, “The use of the building hereby approved shall be incidental to the use of the main dwelling and shall not be occupied as a separate and unassociated planning unit”. |
| 3.3 | **PJ - Land south of Leffins Lane:** The applicants have submitted lots of new documents for the application for the new site, but we have not been reconsulted, and none of the documents appear to answer any of the concerns that APC raised. |
|  | **Acle’s Neighbourhood Plan**  Fiona and I attended an online, free, training session by BDC about updating and renewing Neighbourhood Plans.  The officer suggested that NPs do not expire, but was unable to confirm that the increased CIL funding (25% instead of 15%) would continue once a NP has passed its end date, so I think we need to start the process to renew/re-write at some time soon. Ours has an end date of 2026.  It is important to remember that there is no point repeating policies which are in the Local Plan, and cannot contradict policies which are in the Local Plan – we are looking at things which build on the Local Plan and are very specific to Acle.  When we decide to renew the NP we will need to appoint a Planning Consultant to help with the Plan.  The Government normally provides some funding, through Locality. New funding has just been released.  The training below suggested that, nowadays, you need a digital platform to advertise and promote the NP process so that residents can engage in various ways. That way, all documents can be publicised – facebook, for example, is not a good way to share documents.  We need to do a **report** into progress made with the Plan. I have drafted a report and put it on our website. |
|  | I attended an online, free **Planning Summit**.   * There was a suggestion that we should have on our website an invitation to developers to approach us early in the planning process and we should have a policy as to how we deal with any such approaches. * It is not expected that many of the proposed changes from report in 2020 will happen before any election next year. The Government has said that any changes would protect Neighbourhood Plans which are less than 5 years old, suggesting that older ones are increasingly ignored. * A talk on planning for local renewables, which can be included in a NP. |
| 4.1 | **PJ - Finance Report: (Agenda item 6)** This will be available at the meeting. |
| 5 | **Recreation Centre: (Agenda item 7)** |
| 5.1 | **PJ** - The Rec Centre has asked if we might pay for replacement flooring in the Yare Room, costing around £5,000. Copies of 4 quotes are in the folder. I asked BDC if this might qualify for S106 money but they have said that it does not meet their requirements for sport provision. |
| 6 | **FR - Chocolate Box and The Brian Grint Centre: (Agenda item 8)** |
| 6.1 | **FR - Key Safe**  I have purchased a key safe for the BGC for all village asset keys to be stored and locked away. This is on a combination lock so in the event of an emergency people can be given access. |
| 6.2 | **FR – Electricity:** Work continues to try to get separate supplies set up for the shop and the office space. |
| 6.3 | **KS** – RING doorbell installed & set up. Doorbell chime in the office area but can be heard in function room.  Post & Rope Fencing being installed w/c 31st July by Luke Thacker.  Still chasing renewed quote from NR Asphalt for asphalting the area to the left of BGC/CB. |
| 6.4 | **PJ** – The Archive Group’s filing cabinet and a filing cupboard have arrived. |
| 7 | **Folly Tree House: (Agenda item 9)** |
| 7.1 | **FR - Build Control:** Fiona reported on the issues which are still outstanding, including:  - items to complete compliance with Building Control   * New meter * Screeding the floors after removal of old wooden flooring * Broken lock on fire door * Fencing * Bin store for commercial units * Leases * Additional master keys * Lining in the car park * DDA pull cords in the toilets * Plumbing repairs * Legionella risk assessments * Fire risk assessment * DDA compliant railings to rear fire escape ramp * Fire and electrical certificates * Heras fencing * Mailboxes * H&S folder * Insurance * Head lease to Acle Borderland Trust * New signage * Legionella assessment for the flats * Water leak in one of the flats * Rent * Water supplier issues * Outside tap |
| 8 | **PJ - Highways (Agenda item 10)** |
| 8.1 | **PJ** – Use of the Green will be considered. |
| 8.2 | **PJ – Permissive Path** To consider a request for a permissive path, along the boundary with the high school and along Sth Walsham Road, to enable a linked path from The Windle, via the Mill Lane track to Fishley and onto Upton and Acle footpaths. |
| 9 | **Events (Agenda item 11)** |
|  | Angela will report on the Summer Markets. |
|  | Pauline, Fiona and Kristina – 27th July 2023 |