

# **CASTLE RISING PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Castle Rising Parish Council meeting held in the Cricket Club on Monday 20th November 2023 commencing at 6pm**

## **Present**

Jon Taylor (Vice - Chairman)  
Mr. Geoff Cheney  
Mr. Charlie Curtis

Dr. Claire Smith  
Mr. David Webb  
Mrs. Helen Mackee (Clerk)

## **In attendance**

8 Parishioners

Jon Taylor opened the meeting and expressed his thanks to Castle Rising Cricket Club for allowing the use of their clubhouse. He reported that the cost of using the previous venue, the Reading Room, could not be met from available funds, and therefore the Cricket Club would be the first-choice meeting venue for the foreseeable future. He went on to outline the anticipated procedure for agenda item 9, Open Forum.

## **Apologies**

None

## **Declarations of Interest**

None

## **Election of Chairman and Vice- Chairman**

Jon Taylor was proposed as chairman by Claire Smith, seconded by Charlie Curtis: all councillors were in favour.

David Webb was proposed as Vice-Chairman by Charlie Curtis, seconded by Geoff Cheney: all councillors were in favour.

Both councillors were duly elected to their respective posts and the relevant paperwork was completed by the Clerk

## **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Were unanimously agreed to be a true record of the meeting and were signed by the chairman.

## **Matters Arising**

Following the resignation of Lord Howard, and the subsequent retirement of David Goddard, the Chair explained that the vacancies were currently in the advertising stage and no action by the Parish Council was necessary or possible until advertising had closed. This matter will be carried over to the next meeting.

## **Precept**

No precept had been applied for last year and following considerable expenditure on the Coronation Street Party, the Parish Council account was considerably depleted. The chair advised the meeting that an invoice for £697.56 in respect of the May election had now been received from the Borough Council and, as a result, after allowing for anticipated street lighting costs up to April 2024, the Parish Council did not currently have sufficient funds to pay this invoice. A request had therefore been made to the Borough Council either to defer this payment until April 2024, or to make an advance payment against the precept for 2024/25: and that this request was awaiting a formal response. It was noted that a further invoice for a similar amount for a forced election following the resignation of Lord Howard is likely to be received in this financial, adding further financial burden to the Parish accounts.

The chair further advised that an application for the 2024/25 precept needed to be submitted and justified to the Borough Council by January 2024 at the latest. Following a detailed discussion regarding the amount which should be applied for, it was unanimously agreed that unless any further major unforeseen costs arose before the deadline in January, this should be set at £50 per household, being an average level for villages within the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. This level of precept should enable outstanding election invoices to be cleared; should ensure that increased electricity and insurance costs can be met, and will provide a small amount of working capital necessary for the running of the Parish Council. In future years some houses on the new Knights Hill development may be included in the Parish boundary, potentially increasing the overall precept income and hopefully enabling a reduction in the bill for each household.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The chairman advised the meeting that the clerk had submitted her resignation from this voluntary role with effect from this meeting date, and that therefore alternative arrangements needed to be put in place. As there was no funding

currently available to support a paid employee in this role, after discussion it was agreed that the core tasks should be split and undertaken by different volunteers as follows:

**Stuart Smith:** Responsible Finance Officer \*[See post meeting note]

**Caroline Brooks:** Meeting Minutes.

**David Webb:** All other clerk's responsibilities.

The Clerk was therefore requested to arrange a handover to these volunteers as soon as possible.

### **Roles & Responsibilities (cont'd)**

The following additional roles and responsibilities were also proposed and agreed:

**Geoff Cheney:** Litter Picking and Social

**Claire Smith:** Setting up a Traffic Management Working Group, to include Charlie Curtis, Barry Blades and other volunteers, with the initial objective of organising a feasibility study to be presented to the village.

**Charlie Curtis:** Village maintenance including liaison with the Highways Ranger.

**David Webb:** Defibrillator.

**Vacant Post:** To be allocated.

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### **Meeting Dates 2024**

The following dates were proposed by the chairman and agreed by all:

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October

The proposed venue for all meetings will be the cricket club

### **Open Forum**

The chairman requested that anyone who wished to speak or ask a question should raise their hand and would be allowed to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes.

**Traffic Management Working Group:** Sue Taylor queried whether this would be open for parishioners to join and stated that she wished to volunteer. Nigel Rendall also stated that he wished to volunteer. Claire Smith confirmed that this was in order.

**Meeting Minutes:** John Weatherhead requested that the draft minutes of meetings should be circulated earlier, preferably via posting on the website. Barry Blades commented that there was no obligation to publish minutes but that individual parishioners could request a copy from the Clerk. The chairman advised that under standing order 12(f) “the final agreed minutes of a meeting should be made public by the best available means (notice board and website), but that in principle he supported the objective of getting them out earlier.

**Knights Hill Development:** In answer to a question the chairman explained that the Borough Council had not yet confirmed the exact number of houses to be built, but that the development would hopefully provide additional CIL funding to Castle Rising.

### **Any other business**

The chairman recorded his thanks to Lord Howard for his donation of a Remembrance Day wreath, and to Charlie Curtis for laying it at the service on behalf of the Parish Council.

The chairman presented a floral bouquet to the clerk and thanked her for all her hard work on behalf of the Parish Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

### **Post meeting note:**

It was noted by the chairman that this proposal would require an amendment to standing order 16, which would need to be dealt with in accordance with standing order 26b. This amendment to standing orders was circulated subsequently by email and approved by Council.