

# NAVESTOCK PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY & PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday 12th March 2024 - 19.00 START**

**Present:** Councillors Chris Gelderbloem (CG), Rowena Bere-Brown (RBB), Adrian Enkel (AE), Lucy Gelderbloem (LG), Roy Tyzack (RT)

**Also Present:** Clerk Victor Simmons (VS) + 6 members of the public (MOP)

## **ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY**

**1) Chair's welcome & announcements:** CG welcomed everybody present and read out a generic statement regarding the recording of meetings (NPC now audio record all meetings)

### **2) Reports from Parish groups and clubs:**

**CRICKET CLUB:** (Naren Damodaran report read by VS) - NCC enjoyed a largely uneventful 2023 season with both Saturday teams remaining competitive, despite falling player numbers. The club has decided to withdraw from the T20 midweek league in 2024 as several players are now no longer working from home post Covid. The club is in a relatively sound financial position and continues to improve facilities and grounds equipment where appropriate. NCC would like to thank NPC for their continued support.

**PARISH LUNCH GROUP:** (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - The lunch group numbers increased to 40, with an average attendance of 34. Pleasingly, several of the newer members live locally and are long standing parishioners. Thanks to a £350 reserve, costs were kept at £4 for 3 courses although this year there was a charge for the Christmas meal. The lunch continues to provide a valuable social event.

**WI:** (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - We continue to meet at the cricket pavilion and remain a small group. Sadly, two members passed away during the year and another is now in a nursing home. We have a new Treasurer in Elaine Williams, otherwise the committee remains the same. We have enjoyed various speakers during the year plus paid a visit to the Royal Naval College in Greenwich. In the Spring we held an open meeting in the village hall attended by over 70 people. This event featured the "Essex Police Dog Training Unit" where the animals demonstrated their powers of detection. Despite potentially decreasing numbers, NWI continues to be active at functions as it enters its 74th year.

**VILLAGE HALL:** (Suzanne O'Shea report read by VS) - Ongoing refurbishment continues with the aid of local government grants including new ceilings and hand dryers. Future works such as a new water boiler, internal redecoration and car park repairs are dependent on finances. A working party cleared accumulated rubbish around the building and the scouts are looking to create a small wild flower area between the hall and the sports pavilion. The corridor between the buildings is still sealed. A new website has been created plus there's new signage at the front of the hall. The committee of trustees remains at 6, with a new member replacing Mary Enkel. They meet 4 times a year with the AGM in July. Our principal income source is Little Doves pre-school, although an advertising team has been hard at work trying to generate new hirers. Finances are healthy and we hope to move to online banking soon.

**LITTLE DOVES CHRISTIAN PRE-SCHOOL:** (Pam Biddulph report read by RBB) - Little Doves Christian Pre-school has now been open for nearly 7 years, using Navestock Village Hall. We have 21 staff members, with 5 coming from Navestock, all trained with the latest relevant courses. Child numbers have

increased significantly, with at least 7 families coming from within Navestock, plus a waiting list for both September 2024 and 2025. We continue to enjoy use of the refurbished play area and had a marvellous sports day on The Green with use of the cricket pavilion. Funding continues to be a challenge to meet rising costs and we continually look for fundraising opportunities and donations being a registered charity. We intend to stay at NVH for the foreseeable future and would like to thank the committee for their continued support. Also, thanks to Adrian and Lynn for their individual assistance and help.

**VILLAGE SOCIETY:** (RT) - The village society like many organizations has been struggling to maintain its membership. There was a very successful Christmas lunch followed by a visit to the Queens Theatre in January. April sees the return of our ever popular "Call my Bluff" evening and during the Summer a boat trip is planned. Membership is open to all, with no joining fee and many events are subsidised.

**GREENS CHARITY:** (CG) - This is a small community charity that has struggled of late due to the loss of a couple of members, plus the Treasurer has been unwell. These posts have now been filled and it's hoped that the group will once again play a more prominent role. There were no applications for support in the last year, although during Covid a few applications were received which were supported.

**FIRST NAVESTOCK SCOUT GROUP:** (VS) - No report received.

**CHURCH COUNCIL:** (VS) - No report received.

**3) Any other business:** None, therefore CG closed the Annual Parish Assembly at 19.15

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

### 19.16 Start

**24/14) Chair's welcome & announcements:** CG welcomed everybody present to the Parish Council Meeting and reminded them that the earlier generic statement regarding recording still applied

**24/15) Apologies and reasons for absence:** Mike Parrish (MP) - Holiday (**accepted**), David Williams (DW)

**24/16) Declaration of interests with regards to items on the agenda:** CG (21.14), AE & RT (21.07), RBB (21.06) - All non-pecuniary

**24/17) To approve the minutes from the Parish Council Meeting - Tuesday 9th January 2024:**  
Minutes **agreed** as correct and to be signed by CG

**24/18) Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda**

#### 19.18 Meeting suspended for public participation

**Peter Boyes (MOP)** - Asked if MOP can speak when agenda items are being discussed, as the 'Concerned Residents Group' (CRG) felt answers received so far are not to their satisfaction. He cited CCTV, signage plus budget and expenditure as areas of concern. He also felt an EGM should be called to discuss said issues. **Mrs Beecham (MOP)** - Explained the stress the Spring Farm situation had caused for many years and asked why NPC had not supported the planning application? **Glenn Horton (MOP)** - Felt that NPC support for Spring Farm would be helpful. **Tony Donnelly (MOP)** - Also felt an EGM might be appropriate, plus said the lack of NPC support for Spring Farm seemed to centre on Green Belt status and lack of affordable housing. **Joe McNamara (MOP)** - Asked why NPC

meetings now had Public Participation at the front with time constraints? **CG** - In reply said she would consult with members and give consideration to an EGM. NPC had only voiced concerns to the Spring Farm planning application and the reasons why were on the BBC Planning Portal to view. Ultimately any decision lay with BBC and potentially The Secretary of State, with consultee input playing a very small part. The change in agenda layout was a policy decision and standard practice.

**19.40 End of public participation**

**24/19) Action on matters arising from public participation session:** Clerk to reply to Peter Boyes (CRG)

**24/20) Reports: To receive brief reports from District and County Councillors present:** None present

**24/21) Matters arising from previous meetings:**

**21.01) Village Hall Sports Pavilion (build) and parish field issues:** Clerk - The project has now entered phase 2 (plumbing) with a target to have the pavilion fully functional for the village show in July. There was also focus on completing the car park and frontage to the pavilion plus security of the field. RT commented on the slow pace of the project and asked if the warped fascia boards had been repaired. The Clerk confirmed the installers had completed this work. **MP & Clerk dealing**

**21.02) Flooding & effluent Horseman Side / Goatswood Lane:** CG - Still little change to this long-standing issue that our MP (Alex Burghart) has tried to press for action on. The EA stance is that BBC have suitable powers to deal with the matter but as yet that has not been the case. **Carried forward**

**21.03) Health and Wellbeing:** CG - The WhatsApp groups were working well as a communication tool with 115 members and important local issues being aired. RT had run a well-attended first aid course and there had also been a "Flower Festival" quiz in the village hall which raised over £1000, plus a children's craft event. The 'Hub' in Kelvedon Hatch recently celebrated its second anniversary and was a useful inter parish medium, with Navestock resident's regular attendees. **Carried forward**

**21.04) Spring Farm & Skip-A-Hoy (environmental issues):** CG - The issues of dumping and burning of waste continues on the site despite regular representations to the EA, BBC and our MP (Alex Burghart). RT commented on the height of the accumulated rubbish, however enforcement action by BBC is considered unlikely given the current planning application for housing. **Carried forward**

**21.05) Neighbourhood Watch including CCTV:** Glen Horton (MOP) - Since NHW was set up in 2020 things have improved with CCTV etc, but the required holistic approach still had a way to go. CG - There were now 2 fixed cameras in place plus wildlife and mobile ones, in part funded by the PFCC. Roger Hirst has been instrumental in this, plus securing more police presence in Navestock including an RET officer. Peter Boyes (MOP) - Hoped Alex Burghart would deliver on his promise to improve on the necessary holistic approach which needed to include adjoining boroughs. **Carried forward**

**21.06) Shonks Mill Flood Storage Area (River Roding Project):** CG - Work is due to commence in April / May and the EA together with their contactor are intending to hold consultation meetings soon. NPC intend to push for these meetings to ensure everybody is kept informed **Carried forward**

**21.07) Navestock Side - sewage discharge:** AE - Strutt and Parker have been to site and are happy that the new system Alec's fitted 18 months ago is working correctly. RT - Not happy with the large ditch at the rear of the properties and feels that some of the solid sewage does come from Alec's. Clerk - S & P are writing to all residents as there are 3 properties where suitable equipment has not

been installed / upgraded. Sanctuary Housing have started work on the faulty klargester in Tyser Green with the outflow pipe issues to follow. CG - S & P are dealing as agents for the landowners to the rear of the houses (Church Commissioners) as the EA have shown little interest. **Carried forward**

**21.08) Common Land issues within Navestock Parish:** CG - Nothing new to report on what is a complex and multi-faceted issue. AE - Gave a Navestock overview on the subject mentioning numerous locations plus the cost of fighting any potential breaches. It was agreed to try and find a parish map of common land which was of interest to some of the MOP. **Carried forward**

**21.09) Security of the “The Green” due to vehicular ASB:** Clerk - The re digging of the existing ditch was still in hand with the contractor. In February there was damage to both The Green and the cricket square caused by a quad bike. After discussion it was felt that fencing was the only real solution to the problem, with security of other parish assets also under review. **CG & Clerk dealing**

**21.10) Shonks Mill Road / Dudbrook Road (Lady’s Hill) - LHP Submission:** CG & Clerk - Gave a brief overview of the lack of gritting and ECC’s refusal to reinstate the route. It was felt to be pointless in pursuing this any further and a general discussion followed on signage and funding. **item resolved**

**21.11) Navestock rubbish and litter issues:** CG - NPC were looking to reinstate community litter picks on the 4th Sunday of every month. Peter Boyes (MOP) mentioned an initiative with residents helping BBC (Marcus Hotten - Director Environment) with partnership litter picking. **Carried forward**

**21.12) Boundary issues - Navestock Heath:** CG - The matter had become more complicated than originally thought and now required external advice which may involve expense to NPC. **CG dealing**

**21.13) ECC Locality Fund 2023:** CG & Clerk - Gave an overview of the scheme and said NPC would be claiming their grant of £1,178-18 towards SP plumbing materials by March 31st. **Clerk dealing**

**21.14) Church Road - ongoing sewage issues:** CG - The new unit has been repaired and is now working ok, however the outflow pipes / soakaway appears to be blocked. BBC can’t find documentation regarding the discharge area so the Church Commissioners are assisting. **CG dealing**

**21.15) Parish roads signage:** CG - BBC have replaced several street signs after lobbying by NPC with hopefully more to follow. Speed and direction signage was the responsibility of ECC. **Carried forward**

**21.16) BBPCA AGM - Thursday 30th November (report):** CG - Had unfortunately been unable to attend at short notice and we are still waiting for the minutes to report on. **CG & Clerk dealing**

**21.17) Curtis Mill Lane:** CG - The byway has now been resurfaced right down to Martins Hearn, although speeding may now be an unfortunate consequence of this. **Item resolved**

#### **24/22) Current Matters:**

**22.01) NPC Fixed Asset Policy & Register / Reserves Policy 2024 (for approval):** CG & Clerk - The meeting **approved** the document although AE raised the length of lease left on The Green. The Clerk to investigate this with the Church Commissioners and report back. **Item resolved**

**22.02) BBC Parish Council Panel Meeting 06/02/24 (report):** CG - Attended the meeting which focused primarily on planning. The CIL was discussed at length although at this point it was unclear whether any monies would actually benefit Navestock. Another topic was how Navestock may be affected when the next Local Development Plan is formulated. *Item resolved*

**22.03) Village Gateways:** CG - Had circulated various literature and with possibly 10 access roads, costs for gateways and signs could potentially reach £20K. After discussion involving Councillors and MOP there was a clear consensus that signage reflecting Navestock identity, pride plus a deterrent to nefarious activities may possibly be the sole solution. *Carried forward*

**22.04) Dudbrook Road / Does Hill memorial:** CG - This tragic event has been handled very sensitively by Essex Police, particularly with regard to highway issues following the recent funeral. The memorial site has now dissipated a little but has drawn concerns from local residents. BBC have not responded to a request for policy on such matters. *Carried forward*

**22.05) Keep Britain Tidy Campaigns and Fly-Tipping Research (report):** CG - Attended an interesting seminar on the subject along with Peter Boyes (MOP). It remains to be seen if BBC or ECC embrace some of the ideas put forward including expensive signage. *Item resolved*

**22.06) Annual playground inspection 2024:** AE - The playground equipment has been there for over 20 years and was second hand when installed. Clerk - The previously agreed (July 2023) repainting is due to start in April (weather dependant) with the annual inspection to follow. CG - A working party is needed to keep the area in an acceptable condition. *Carried forward*

**24/23) Reports from Working Parties:** RT - The historical smell of sewage at the junction of Horseman Side and Goatswood Lane still persists. There were occasional flooding issues at the Horseman Side and Old Road junction which drew general discussion. AE - Reported flooding issues at the junction of Navestock Side and Green Lane where water runs off of the fields. The Clerk had reported this to ECC Highways recently. The Tyser Green construction works were ongoing. RBB - Princes Road had been closed overnight for highway repairs which unfortunately didn't appear to be a particularly good job. CG - Still some issues regarding the bund works at Middlebrook Farm, although the contractor has filled in the damaged verges in Murthing Lane with type 1 material. A new camera has been installed in Curtis Mill Green and at present quad bike activity seems to have ceased. LG - The street sign in Church Road is still awaiting replacement as BBC installed the new one in Kelvedon Hatch in error! The uneven road surface in Old Road has been reported plus the farmer has undertaken extensive ditch and hedge works in Sabines Road. There were still issues in Byway 34 regarding a caravan sited on the verge (BBC aware).

**24/24) Correspondence and Clerks Report:** Clerk - The NPC precept request of £22K had been submitted to BBC on schedule (5th year at this figure). The BBPCA Clerk had resigned with the next meeting on March 21st (CG attending). NPC had replied regarding the 'Hedgehog Awareness' initiative but would not be erecting signage. A request asking for authority to include the Navestock 'Millenium Time Capsule' in a national archive was authorised. An FOI request regarding council properties was directed onto BBC and copies of the 'Essex & Southend Care Directory 2024' were available in the VH foyer. NPC had applied for a free portrait of King Charles III for the VH plus submitted two locations for consideration regarding 'bleedbags'. The Clerk was still dealing with perceived issues regarding lack of safety cuts within the M25, although these can only be undertaken between October and February.

**24/25) Planning:** CG - The Legh Cottage appeal had been dismissed and RT raised a potential issue regarding a planning breach on land near 'Pink Cottage' in Albyns Lane, Curtis Mill Green.

**24/26) Finance:** CG has checked the accounts / records & everything is in order. Cheques to be signed were approved for Payroll (March) and JAM Parrish (sports pavilion shower pods).

**24/27) Discussion Items and date of next meeting:** CG - The next meeting was May 14th which will be preceded by the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting. Peter Boyes (MOP) again requested that NPC give consideration to calling an EGM to allow open discussion on various issues, which CG said would be considered by members and decided upon.

**Next meeting: Tuesday 14th May, 2024, 19.00**

**24/28) Exclusion of the press and public (start 21.50)**

It was **agreed** to close the meeting to the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the basis that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

There were currently THREE confidential items to be considered:

**28.01) Clerks salary arrangements:** This item was **agreed** but due to the confidential nature of the subject, these minutes are not available for public inspection.

**28.02) NPC e-mail addresses and website domain:** This item was **agreed** but due to the confidential nature of the subject, these minutes are not available for public inspection.

**28.03) Annual review of NPC documentation:** Due to the confidential nature of this subject, these minutes are not available for public inspection.

**Meeting closed at 22.30**

***Victor Simmons***  
***Clerk & RFO to Navestock Parish Council***  
***6th May 2024***