

Parish Clerk & RFO Report July 2024

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 4 June 2024:

Minute 2630/2425 – National Grid: Norwich to Tilbury statutory consultation

I have approached a Burstall resident/professional who is assisting our neighbouring parishes to draft their consultation responses. Cllr Ward has subsequently contacted the resident to relay the position of the Parish Council.

In case of doubt or question, there would be no financial charge to the Parish Council.

Minute 2632/2425 – Renewal of Achilles Licence

A draft Licence has been issued to Achilles; we await their signed copy and payment.

I have contacted the Corporate Property, Assets and Investment team at Suffolk County Council to ask for a conversation about the Playing Field Lease agreement between SCC and CWPC.

FINANCE

1st July 2024

A notification has been received from Unity Trust Bank advising that a tariff adjustment has been made on the current account meaning that an additional charge of 15p will be incurred for each individual transaction.

As I believe the Current Account doesn't meet the criteria for Tier 2 charges this has been raised with the bank, who will raise a complaint to hopefully get this changed back.

Unity Tier 1 Current Account**		Unity Tier 2 Current Account	
Turnover per annum*	Under £100k	Turnover per annum*	£100k – £2m
Fee	£6 per month	Fee	£6 per month plus 15p per individual transaction
Charged	Monthly	Charged	Monthly
Opening deposit	Minimum £500	Opening deposit	Minimum £500
Interest	No credit interest paid	Interest	No credit interest paid

OTHER MATTERS

Update re the Copdock Interchange underpass / art student's mural project.

I've continued to chase the National Highways regional senior engineer (structures) for a response to the proposal of the Suffolk One Art students painting a mural on the underpass walls; they've finally come back with the following response –

“Thank you for following up on this matter. I apologise for the delay in my response. I have now consulted widely with my colleagues in the appropriate teams across the company.

As you may have been previously advised, it is not our policy to give permission for requests of this nature for engineering and other reasons. The request also does not comply with the national standards for the management of this type of assets that we must work to and therefore any permission would be dependent on following the process for obtaining a departure from these standards.

Having liaised with our Safety and Engineering Standards colleagues who would consider and decide on this a request, they have confirmed that they have no record of any request having been formerly submitted and no similar departure exists. They have identified several significant concerns with this request based on several factors however they have commented that it may be possible to consider taking this further if these key concerns were addressed. These concerns are based on experience where unapproved murals in similar locations have led to problems which we would wish to avoid.

I have summarised the issues raised by our colleagues below:

1. **Requirement to comply with national standards:** Murals painted on concrete do not comply with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and British Standards. These murals use many opaque colours, which are not transparent and could potentially hide structural defects. Additionally, they may prevent the structure from 'breathing,' necessitating a Departure.
2. **Approved Departures in DAS:** The Departures database system (DAS) does not contain any approved departures for murals because none have been formally approved in recent years. Existing murals on the network may have been executed without formal permission from SES or without being formally recorded in DAS.
3. **Technical and Engineering Concerns:** Departure submissions are typically made by designers who understand and apply all relevant technical requirements and comply with our departure procedures. However, the lack of approved Departures in our DAS system indicates that the proposal may not be agreeable from a technical or engineering perspective.
4. **Maintenance Requirements:** Continued maintenance of the mural would be necessary to preserve its intended aesthetics and maintain an inviting environment. There are existing murals on the network that have degraded, with paint flaking off and more illegal graffiti added over the years. This deterioration makes the murals unsightly and potentially threatening. Funding for mural maintenance will need to be agreed upon as part of the approval process.
5. **Specification:** Any permission would include the requirement to use materials approved within the Highways Standards and British Standards and require suitable preparation of the surfaces to be painted.
6. **Use of Approved Contractor:** We have also been advised that a likely condition of any approval would be the use of a competent contractor who would manage the site and

ensure that the safety of the students and ensure the works were completed in accordance with the requirements.

I appreciate the above requirements appear more onerous than you might have been expecting initially. If you wish to discuss further, I can arrange a call to cover these requirements in greater detail.”

My response to this was –

Many thanks for your comprehensive response which I shall forward onto the Council.

In the interim however, and being my own initial response to the points raised below, perhaps National Highways would like to comment on this - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-64942202#:~:text=Street%20artists%20have%20been%20allowed,under%20the%20A52%20in%20Nottingham>

and explain how the situation in Nottinghamshire differs to that at the Copdock Interchange underpass?”

and

“Apologies, I forgot to include this one as well; I’ve just found it on National Highways own website - <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-west-news/brightening-up-the-m32-artists-set-to-transform-motorway-viaduct/>”

which he has replied with -

“Thanks Sue, appreciate you sending the examples below.

Both structures mentioned in the articles below are located outside of our region. We will speak with the regional teams that managed these works to understand the process involved in facilitating similar projects and get back to you.”

We can wait to see what they come back with or we can ask Chris Hudson to go to the press with this!

Sue Frankis
Clerk to the Parish of Copdock & Washbrook