

Little Smeaton Parish Council

Little Smeaton Parish Council Meeting September 23rd 2020

MINUTES

In line with current emergency legislation this Parish Council meeting was conducted via Skype due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the need for social distancing.

The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending online.

Present – Cllr G Ivey, Cllr R Brown (Clerk), Cllr C. Atkinson, Cllr A. Hancock, Cllr J. Howdle (From 19.05)

Councillor Ivey opened the meeting and thanked all Councillors for their attendance and their hard work and team spirit moving the work of the Parish Council forward.

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of interest.

Item 15. Highway Drainage scheme New Road and Main Street, Little Smeaton,

Councillors Hancock and Brown declared an interest as the scheme will include drainage outside their houses

3. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2020, were signed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Councillor Hancock, seconded by Councillor Atkinson.

4. Public Forum. Questions and concerns raised by the public.

No members of the public were present

5. Financial Matters

5.1. To receive a bank reconciliation as at 1st September 2020, to be signed as true and correct. Two versions of the reconciliation were presented to the meeting, one that had been reconciled to the Income and Expenditure Report and one to the Bank Statements. It was confirmed that both will, in future, be prepared and presented at each meeting. A note to be added to this meeting's reconciliation report stating that £1.34 received into the Co-Operative account bank, does not appear on the relevant bank statement. Proposed by Councillor Atkinson, seconded by Councillor Howdle.

5.2. Internal Control Checklist. Received from Councillor Hancock, who reported to the meeting that, whilst there were some issues, considerable progress had been made tightening up our internal controls. The report will be completed prior to each meeting and presented for information. It was agreed that an up to date VAT spreadsheet would also be presented to each meeting. Thanks, were offered to Councillor Hancock for the work undertaken.

5.2 Current Income and Expenditure sheet to be signed as a true and correct record. Received and accepted as correct. Proposed by Councillor Atkinson, seconded by Councillor Howdle.

5.3. Appointment of Internal Auditor. Agreed to invite Paul Clarke to undertake our internal audit at the end of the financial year. Clerk to contact him to confirm and to update him on the changes to our internal control systems.

5.4. Preparation for Budget discussions. Report by Clerk considered. Reporting mechanism agreed subject to the addition of a contingency/emergency heading, and a Covid 19 heading. Councillors to provide the Clerk with details of any projects they wish to take forward during 2021/2 so that any financial implications can be included in the budget. It was agreed that a proportion of the rent from Hillside Cottage will be ringfenced for improvements to the cottage. Councillors are prepared to consider increasing the precept if required.

5.5. to 5.9 Ratification of financial decisions taken in between meetings. All payments approved:

- £240.00 to remove dead willow tree branch
- £28.00 leaflets for Safer Streets project
- £163.00 to make playground Covid 19 compliant It was noted that this amount had been successfully recovered through CEF claim.
- £60.00 for cutting grass and removing branches on Mount Pleasant
- £50.00 for removal of damaged bench

Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Howdle.

5.10. Other payments already approved. These were noted:

- Dog poop bags £33.78
- Hanging baskets £660.00 (Previously thought to be £550, VAT not included)
- Room hire £10.00
- Goal Post paint £16.00
- Plants £50.00
- Training from YLCA £148.50 (Noted £5.00 excess paid in error has been claimed back from YLCA).
- Grass Cutting £1000.00
- Clerk's salary £250.00

5.11. Update regarding the Co-op and Lloyd's bank. Both Co-operative Bank accounts are now closed and LSPC have received final statements from the bank confirming this. LSPC now has only one bank account with Lloyds. The necessary forms have been received from Lloyds Bank to include Councillor Howdle as a signatory to this account. Councillor

Hancock to action this. Unused or no longer needed items from the Co-operative bank to be returned to the Doncaster Branch.

5.12. Insurance Claim for damaged bench. Noted that £169.00 had been received from Zurich in full and final settlement of the claim.

5.13. AJ1 Road safety project. Councillor Atkinson informed the meeting that our application had been submitted on time. It had been expected that the results would be available by the end of September but, due to the large number of applications, this has now been delayed until the end of October.

5.14. LSPC Asset Register. An updated register was presented to the meeting and discussed. Poop bag dispensers to be valued and included. Parish Land on Mount Pleasant valuation required. To be updated by Clerk and resubmitted to November meeting.

6. Creation of a Single Unitary Authority. Presentations from North Yorkshire County Council, Selby District Council, and information from York City have been considered and shared with local residents who have been encouraged to respond with their views. The decision will be taken in due course by Government, with implementation expected in April 2022.

7. Safer Streets Project. 91 households have now registered with the project from the two Smeaton villages. The project will feature in the next village magazine and it is hoped more people will register then. Posters have been laminated and will be displayed on the notice boards. The project is already featured on our website and Facebook account. No further action seems appropriate at this time.

8. Policies. Two new policies were presented to the meeting, a Grievance Policy and a Discipline Policy. These are applicable to the Clerk even though she is not paid. The Grievance Policy requires further work to ensure a workable appeals process. The Clerk will look at this and present it to the next meeting. The Discipline Policy was adopted. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Hancock.

9. Website Documentation. LSPC is required to have a Publication Scheme. The Clerk and Councillor Atkinson to work on this together and to present it to the next meeting.

10. Website Accessibility.

10.1 Overview Building on the Equalities Act 2018 and coming into force today, all public sector body websites need to be compliant with the legislation to improve accessibility for users with various disabilities.

10.2 Councillor Atkinson has been working to make our website as compliant as possible including putting tags into the coding to highlight headings etc., and text descriptions for pictures.

10.3 Councillor Atkinson has written a Website Accessibility Statement which is available on the LSPC website. This states that not all aspects of the website are fully compliant due to doing so would be a “disproportionate burden” to the size and budget of the Council. Little Smeaton Parish Council have declared their website to be Partially Compliant.

10.4 The status of the website and the statement were agreed. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Hancock. Councillor Atkinson will now work on a Cookie Statement for the website. To facilitate this, it was agreed that Councillor Atkinson would become the “owner” of the website. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Hancock.

11. Emergency Plan.

11.1 The Plan. The Plan has been updated and now includes places of safety should the need arise and specialist skills etc. identified in the two villages. The action pyramid still requires names from KSPC. The Clerk to send the updated plan to the Clerk of KSPC to request these. The contact details of the volunteers have been updated but are held separately from the plan. The completed plan to be presented to the November meeting to be formally adopted. KSPC to be requested to do the same.

11.2 Volunteers. Consent to hold personal data forms have been received from all but 17 of the volunteers used during the Coronavirus pandemic. 5 new volunteers have come forward and in total we now have 39 volunteers for the two villages. The previous Excel spreadsheet to be deleted and in future the information will be held securely on the website.

11.3 Feedback. Positive feedback was received from the volunteers who responded to the request. One suggestion was made that we should, when the virus allows, hold periodic events to bring the volunteers together with, for example, First Aid training.

12. Quarry extension application. The application to extend the quarry has not as yet been heard by North Yorkshire County Council Planning Committee. The report by officers is not as yet complete due to illness.

13. Road Traffic signs update. The 40 mile per hour signs have been erected. The 40 mile per hour painted signs have been approved but no date set. The sign warning about horse should be installed within the next two weeks.

14. Playground repairs and inspection

14.1 Opening It was noted that the playground was successfully opened on the 8th August following considerable action to ensure compliance with Government Covid 19 guidance.

14.2 Playground Inspection It was noted that ROSPA will be undertaking an independent inspection of the playground sometime in the next few weeks. Any repairs recommended will be considered on receipt of the report.

15. Highway Drainage on New Road and Main Street. The update from NYCC remains that the scheme has been designed but funding is awaited. The Clerk to contact Cllr McCartney for assistance to move this forward.

16. Dropped Kerbs. This was adjourned previously because of Covid 19. Still not possible to pursue. To be reviewed at the May 2021 meeting.

17. Hillside Cottage.

17.1 Survey. The surveyor has visited the cottage and his report is awaited.

Unfortunately, however, no quotes had been obtained due to a bereavement suffered by the member of staff responsible. A quote for insulating the cottage had been arranged by the Agent but LSPC has been informed that internal insulation is not be possible due to the damp. External insulation it was felt by the contractor would damage the look of the cottage. No action will, therefore be taken until the report from the surveyor is received.

17.3 Grant It is not, therefore, possible to apply for a grant to improve the energy efficiency of the Cottage. However, due to the work already undertaken, an EPC exemption certificate has been submitted and logged with the Agent. This means LSPC is exempt from the requirement to continue to improve energy efficiency for five years.

18. Planning Applications. Actions taken to comment on applications noted.

19. Correspondence Received

19.1 Email from local residence. LSPC Clerk to approach Kirk Smeaton School to enquire whether they would be interested in using the phone box as an art gallery for the children. The phone box to remain unlocked to facilitate people accessing the map. The risk of vandalization is felt to be insignificant. Clerk to write to the resident to inform him of the decision.

19.2 Christmas Trees KSPC Chair has contacted LSPC Chair suggesting both villages decorate for Christmas. KSPC intend to purchase trees for their lamp posts. LSPC feel this would be too expensive, but will decorate the well site and join in with other festivities as appropriate.

20. Matters for inclusion on the next agenda. The following items to be included on the agenda for November:

- Budget
- Selling the land next to Hillside Cottage
- AJ1 project
- Cookie statement
- Grievance Policy
- Asset register
- Publication scheme

Meeting closed 21. 10