

Little Smeaton Parish Council

Little Smeaton Parish Council Meeting July 15th 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, Cllr Atkinson, Cllr Hancock

One member of the public in attendance

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of interest.

Item 17. 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. Welcome to PC Neil Morris Police Beat Manager.

PC Neil Morris new Police Beat Manager for the local area joined the meeting. He was welcomed by the Chairman who explained that the Parish Council was concerned about a) recent burglaries, b) the apparent reluctance of some local residents to dial 101 c) possible obstruction of Main Street.

PC Morris stated that he had looked into the recent burglaries and could confirm that they appeared to be a one off and not part of any bigger picture. He was pleased to be able to report that a quad bike, stolen as part of these burglaries, was recovered and returned to the owner. He encourages residents to phone 101 if they have any concerns. This is a free number, with a call back function. Residents do not need to worry that they are wasting police time – there is a triage system with call handlers who will ensure that a police car is only dispatched if necessary. However the neighbourhood team welcome all intelligence. It is also possible to email generalenquiries@northyorkshire.police.uk. The public, though

should phone 999 if there is any immediate danger to person or property. PC Morris plans to spend time in the village in his mobile office and hopes to have a PCSO on a bike. He will keep an eye on local property, speeding, illegal parking which causes an obstruction and other issues of concern to local residents. PC Morris was thanked for his time and useful contribution.

4. Co- option and welcome of New Councillor

Joanne Howdle was formally co-opted to the Parish Council as a Councillor. The Chair welcomed her to the meeting. Councillor Howdle declared an interest in Item 17 for the same reason.

5. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2020, were signed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Councillor Hancock, seconded by Councillor Atkinson.

6. Position of Parish Clerk

It was with considerable regret that the meeting noted the resignation, due to pressure of work, of Adele Curnow from the position of Clerk to the Parish Council. The interim position of Councillor Brown acting as the Clerk on a voluntary basis was ratified. This will be reviewed at the end of this calendar year.

7. Election of Vice Chair

Due to the above decision Councillor Brown resigned as Vice Chair. Councillor Ivey proposed Councillor Atkinson for Vice Chair. This was seconded by Councillor Hancock.

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

No members of the public were present

9. Financial Matters

9.1. To receive a bank reconciliation as at 15th July 2020, to be signed as true and correct.

As it is proposed, under the revised Banking Regulations to change this process, this matter will be taken once the new regulations have been considered

9.2. Current finance sheet as at 15th July 2020, to be signed as a true and correct record

Councillor Howdle asked where the subscriptions from the village magazine were recorded. It was explained that the magazine was not produced by the Parish Council and that it had a committee and bank account of its own.

It was agreed, in future to show the total rent received for Hillside cottage and to show the agent's fee as an ongoing expenditure.

The current finance sheet was signed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Councillor Atkinson and Seconded by Councillor Hancock.

9.3. Update on the preparation of the audit papers for the 31 July 2020 Annual Audit

Audit papers for 2019/20 had been prepared and signed by Adele Curnow The Internal Auditor has approved and signed the papers. Councillor Ivey has checked the papers.

9.4. AGAR to be approved and signed

In view of the above, the meeting was asked to approve the Chairman signing the AGAR.

9.4.1 The Chair sought approval to sign the certificate of Exemption

9.4.2 The Chair sought approval to sign the Annual Governance Statement

9.4.3 The Chair sought approval to sign the Annual Accounting Statement

Proposed by Councillor Atkinson and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour. The documents will be placed on the web site. A notice informing the public that the accounts are available to be accessed between 1st August and 8th September 2020 will be placed on the village notice boards.

9.5. Update regarding the Co-op and Lloyd's bank and next steps.

Councillor Hancock updated the meeting. The Parish Council currently has two bank accounts with the Co-operative Bank. One with a nil balance, one with £300.79 (following payment of £500 for grass cutting). A small number of current invoices will be paid from this account and it will then be closed. The Parish Council has one bank account with Lloyds Bank. This will then be the only bank account held. Councillor Brown will have the authority to create payments and Councillors Ivey, Hancock and Atkinson will be able to authorise them. Two bank signatories will be needed to authorise any online payment. Councillor Ivey as Chairman currently holds the only the bank card able to purchase items on the internet. However due to increasing possibilities of making 'online purchases' on behalf of the council it was decided to increase the number of debit card holders from 1 to 2. The Clerk also holds a cheque book and paying in book for this account.

9.6 Update on application for a loan to cover the costs of necessary renovations at the cottage.

Hillside cottage requires considerable structural work including repairs to windows and window frames; removal of Parkray and plastering of the wall, pipes to be boxed in and possible repairs to the roof. This is on top of the extensive work on the heating undertaken by the Parish Council in the last financial year. At this time it is not clear that the Council can afford all the repairs necessary. After considerable discussion it was agreed to obtain an estimated quote for all necessary repairs and to then set up a task group to consider the way forward. A rent review and a re-evaluation of the value of the property will also be considered.

- 9.7.** Approval for payment of invoice numbers 294-2021 and 303-2021 payable to YLCA for training attended by Councillor Brown and plants purchased by Chair.

Approval was given for the payment of the above invoices. Approval was also given to pay the following invoices: Clerk's salary £250.00, Lofthouse & Co £107.52, First Impressions £660, Paint purchased by Councillor Hancock for the goalposts £16.00 and Hire of Community Room £10.00

Proposed by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Councillor Howdle.

- 9.8** Approval for purchase - dog poop bags

Purchase of poop bags proposed by Councillor Hancock, and seconded by Councillor Atkinson.

- 9.9.** To consider applying for a Tesco grant.

Consideration was given to applying for a grant from Tesco to, potentially, develop a community space within the village, for example where the Council has recently planted fruit trees. However considerable work would need to be undertaken putting together a bid and, even if the Council was successful no monies would be available for, at least two years. In view of the current workload on council members it was decided to defer this item until November 2020.

- 9.10.** AJ1 Road safety project. To consider whether to seek to apply for a grant

Grant monies of up to £20,000 are available to successful projects from the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. Closing date for applications is 31st August 2020. Following discussion, it was agreed to explore the possibility of bidding for electronic speeding signs for key points in the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek costings and if they were acceptable a bid would be placed. Proposed by Councillor Atkinson, seconded by Councillor Brown

10. Local Government Association consultation on new model code of conduct

The new model Code of Conduct for Councillors was considered, and support for the framework expressed. However concern was expressed that the model did not contain any sanctions for Councillors who broke the code. Councillor Ivey to respond on behalf of the Parish Council.

11. Adoption of policies and review of policies recommended by YLCA

- 11.1** To review and adopt revised policies:

Standing Financial Regulations:

Following discussion and subject to alterations, adoption of the Standing Financial Regulations was proposed by Councillor Atkinson and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

With reference to agenda item 9.1 it was agreed to adopt the process as laid out in the Financial Regulations. This means that the bank reconciliation will take place outside the meeting by a Councillor other than the Chair. The outcome will be reported to the meeting. This will enable greater scrutiny.

Meeting adjourned at 21.10. To be reconvened Monday 20th July at 18.30

Meeting reconvened at 18.30 Monday 20th July

Complaints Policy, Vexatious Policy and Freedom of Information Policy approved as circulated. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Brown. All in favour

As an emergency motion, proposed by the Chair, the amended Standing Orders were considered by the meeting and approved. Proposed by Councillor Hancock, seconded by Councillor Howdle All in favour.

11.2 To prioritise the recommended policies and agree next steps.

Councillor Brown to draft a grievance policy and a discipline policy for consideration at the September meeting. All agreed policies will be placed on the Council web site for ease of reference and greater transparency.

12. GDPR

Councillor Brown has completed the data audit required under GDPR legislation. She proposed that the historic archive should, if possible, be filed with the older Little Smeaton file in the archive at County Hall. This was agreed. Councillor Brown to contact the archive and request permission to take it to them. There is also an archive of Parish Council minutes, audit papers etc which will be stored at Councillor Brown's house until a new Clerk is appointed.

Councillor Brown will circulate the data audit paperwork.

13. Signage about fly tipping/littering

This item was adjourned. To be reconsidered at a later date.

14. Quarry extension application.

The application to extend the quarry is expected to be heard by the Planning Committee of Selby District Council on the 30th July 2020. Kirk Smeaton Parish Council has requested that LSPC support their objection to the application. Following discussion it was resolved to request a copy of the planning officer's report from Councillor

McCartney and then to respond appropriately depending on the report's conclusion. If the report supports the extension the Chair of LSPC will write making clear our concerns about the future of Brockadale Nature Reserve if the quarry is extended. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Brown. All in favour.

15. Road, traffic signs update

Councillor Ivey has obtained an update from Gary Lumb who confirms that the signs should be erected on New Road in the next 3/4weeks.

16. Playground repairs and inspection

Councillor Brown has visited the playground to understand where we are with repairs. However further consideration is required and she proposed a full PC visit to the playground. The meeting resolved that it was minded to open the playground but that an inspection was required to decide on signage and outstanding issues highlighted by the inspection. Councillor Brown to canvass for dates. Councillor Hancock requested that Councillor Brown enquire of the Insurance Company with regards to opening the playground

17. Highway Drainage on New Road and Main Street

Councillor Ivey has received an update from Gary Lumb who confirmed that the design is completed and that he is currently waiting for funding. Councillor Ivey has emailed twice with evidence of the grit brought down Main Street by the drainage problem Selby District Council has committed to getting this swept as a matter of urgency.

18. Dropped Kerbs

This was adjourned previously because of Covid 19. Still not possible to pursue. To be reviewed at the September meetng.

19. Bus Shelter

The shelter has been repaired. Item closed.

20. Hillside Cottage

20.1 Review of the boxing-in of central heating pipework. Currently on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Boxing in of pipework to await the necessary funding. However the fire also needs boxing in. Two quotes to be requested from the Agents.

20.2 Update on EPC certificate inspection process, and next steps as required.

Councillor Hancock has been researching the legislation with regards to the EPC. This states that no one shall be obliged to spend more than £3.5k in a five year period. As the Parish Council has already spend £6.5k on installing central heating it was resolved to self-certificate the council as exempt due to improvements made. This exemption to last for 5 years. Proposed by Councillor Hancock, seconded by Councillor Brown. All in favour.

17.3 Update on actions regarding concerns about the service provided by the agents and next steps as required.

Our current contract to be reviewed. All councillors to consider what changes they would like to see and inform the Clerk who will collate and begin a conversation with the Agents.

21. Village Emergency Plan

The emergency response to Covid 19 and the lockdown is now beginning to wind down. However our “draft” plan still needs completing. In particular written permission from the school and the church needed for their premises to be used as shelter in an emergency. Clerk to write to them.

All Little Smeaton volunteers to be written to expressing our thanks for their invaluable help during the lockdown. Also to be asked if they wish to remain on our volunteers list in the future. If they do a GDPR consent form to be sent.

22. To receive any planning applications.

Planning application received for a property on Stan Valley. Councillors to send any comments to the Clerk.

23. Correspondence Received

23.1. None

26. Matters for inclusion on the next agenda

Statement of Assets review

Website accessibility

Meeting closed 20.30