

BARWICK in ELMET & SCHOLES PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12th October 2021 at 7pm in Scholes Pavilion

PRESENT:

Councillor	Graham Slater (Chair)		
Councillors	Claire Hassell	Mike Brunt	Stella Walsh
	Jacqueline Ward	Paul Remmer	

In attendance: The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

1 APOLOGIES. None.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST. There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 TO SIGN AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Committee meeting of 14th September 2021 be approved, all in favour.

4 REPORT OF PROGRESS ON MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- i. Tree Inspection Reports.** – it was noted that planning permission was awaited for the tree on Jack Heaps field and that a letter had been written to the farmer regarding the tree on the allotments boundary. The deadline for planning permission was 29th October. A voicemail message had been left with the contractor to notify him of the Committee's decision last time following which he had visited the Clerk, he would probably start work in December.
- ii. Christmas Lights.**
The Clerk had agreed a switch-on date with Leeds Lights (last Friday in November) but there were no other new developments since the last meeting to report, it was still hoped to meet them in February 2022.
- iii. Scholes Lodge Lane.**
A revised quotation had been received from the contractor for the additional work. The original quotation (November 2020) was £5,450. The additional work would be £1,320. The combined total was within the budget agreed. Cllrs. Remmer and Walsh had met the contractor on-site and agreed the depth of the gravel, granite slabs (more expensive but only marginally so) and additional work for the wall. They hoped to have a further meeting to discuss locations of trees and other granite features. The contractor was aware of pipe work for street lighting just below the surface. The contractor had advised that he would not be able to start work until the end of the month. There had been correspondence from a resident of the cul de sac wanting to know when the work would start. The Clerk would write to the contractor and ask for start date and then write to the resident accordingly. The contractor would drop off a copy of his insurance certificate.
- iv. Benches.**
Cllr. Maude had drafted an application form for Scholes residents wanting a bench and over the weekend, Cllr. Brunt had drafted one for Barwick residents. Cllr. Brunt sought clarification on a number of issues and his draft used red font to highlight the uncertainties and it was clear that a policy was needed. The original proposal was to use benches made from recycled plastic however several Councillors expressed a preference for wood as being a more natural material and in keeping with the rural character of the area (and more comfortable to sit on in hot weather). Sponsors would be allowed to choose their own wording for the inscription which would be subject to Parish Council (PC) approval. Bench sponsorship would be for the lifetime of the bench. Suitable locations and bench model would be determined by the PC (Cllr. Brunt was in the process of determining suitable locations for benches in Barwick in Elmet). There was discussion regarding offering sponsorship of replacement benches at existing locations. It was agreed that sponsorship only be accepted for benches to be placed in memorial or personal reasons (i.e. no business sponsorship), that locations be on a first come first serve basis and that

it was not appropriate for unrelated sponsors to share a bench. Cllr, Brunt agreed to draft a sponsorship policy taking the above comments into account.

v. Programme of Works.

Previous Chairs of the Committee had used a Programme of Works to anticipate upcoming maintenance. It was decided that although the Programme of Works drives a commitment to maintain assets, it was not necessary to reintroduce this document as its purpose was covered by effective annual risk assessments, the work of subcommittees plus the action tracker produced by the Clerk and residents reporting concerns about assets to the PC.

vi. Entrance gate to Hall Tower field.

Although it was agreed that repair of the gate was not urgent, it was nevertheless desirable to have it repaired in time for the Platinum Jubilee (see below) and as contractors need plenty of notice, it was decided that Cllr. Hassell would pursue contact with the local sawmill.

vii. Waste Bins.

Cllr. Brunt asked if the benches and bins in the community orchard belonged to the PC and was advised that this was not PC land.

5. WORK REQUESTS

i. Budget for the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

There was discussion regarding the Platinum Jubilee and whether there was a need for the PC to include this in its budget. Consideration had been given to the PC funding a beacon, a shuttlebus, a climbing wall and a big screen. It was hoped to secure funding for the climbing wall and that the only cost of the shuttlebus would be the driver. £6,000 (£3,000 each village) had been suggested in the draft budget (item 7 below).

ii. Monthly zoom payments.

It was **resolved** to cancel the monthly subscription to Zoom with immediate effect.

iii. Newsletter.

It was **resolved** that future newsletters would be printed on recycled paper. There would be an agenda item at the January meeting to consider newsletter sponsorship.

iv. Scholes Lodge Farm grant application for bulbs, flower seeds and trees.

It had been agreed by the Scholes Lodge Farm subcommittee that a grant application for £700 for bulbs be made to the Community Fund. Cllr. Slater had instead applied for a similar amount to the Ward Councillor's Environment Fund. The Chair of the Scholes Lodge Farm subcommittee expressed disappointment that he was not consulted prior to this action being taken and asked to be informed in future of any proposed actions not agreed by the subcommittee before such actions took place.

v. Remembrance Day 2021.

It was **resolved** to recommend to the full PC that a £200 donation be made to the local branch of the Royal British Legion for the 2021 Remembrance Day commemoration. The Clerk would contact the Royal British Legion to advise them to use the PC grants application process should they require payment for the bugler.

6. "VISION FOR THE FUTURE".

Cllr. Slater reported progress with the "Vision for The Future" project. Veolia had agreed to include access control as part of their award for £38,000 subject to three quotations being obtained. Cllr. Slater had obtained the necessary quotations and circulated them to the Committee. It was noted the cost of tarmac would soon be going up which could add £4,000 to the cost of the project and that prompt action was necessary to avoid unnecessary delay in the grant application process and the Committee agreed that he should submit the two additional quotations to Veolia (one having already been submitted) as soon as possible as instructions to begin the work could not be given until both finance agreements had been finalised. There would be an agenda item next time to consider the playground.

7. ANNUAL AGENDA ITEMS (AUTUMN PRE-OCTOBER)

It was noted the report of the External Auditor had been received after 3pm on 30th September and that the RFO had that day displayed a copy of their report and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit on the website and in notice boards.

The previous day, Cllrs. Hassell, Maude and Slater and the RFO had met to discuss the 2022-23 budget. Cllr. Slater circulated a printed copy of the proposed budget to all present for consideration of the next meeting. The RFO would contact Leeds City Council to establish number of properties now in the Parish and to obtain the precept calculator template for next year. It was estimated that anticipated payments to the end of the financial year would leave a reserve of about £24,000. It was proposed to increase the precept by no more than the Consumer Price Index. The budget would be one of the first items on the agenda of the next Committee meeting.

8. ACTION TRACKER

- i. **Hedge cutting in the Parish.** The previous month, the Clerk had taken a contractor round the Parish to show him all the boundary hedges which needed cutting, this had not resulted in a quotation being received. The Clerk had spoken to another contractor who was going to go round the Parish the weekend of 9th/10th October, a quotation was awaited. It was noted that in the meantime, the hedge on Scholes Lodge Farm had been cut and it was agreed that the Clerk seek to get the allotment hedges cut. Cllr. Slater would contact a local farmer regarding the cutting of the hedge adjoining Scholes football pitch.
- ii. **Local Centres Funding** – there had been no progress since the last meeting in arranging a meeting with Ward Cllr. Robinson to progress this.
- iii. **Papers in the garage.** Cllr. Brunt had made a start on going through the papers from the PC garage, scanning documents which needed to be retained and disposing of others.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be **Tuesday 9th November 2021 at 7pm** in the Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 9:15pm.