

**MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7:30pm in Barwick Village Hall.

**PRESENT:**

Councillor	Claire Hassell (Chair)		
Councillors	Mike Brunt	Karen Dales	Graham Slater
	David Budd	Kinga Ragg	Jacqueline Ward

**In attendance:** The Clerk and two residents.

**1 APOLOGIES.** Cllrs. Cantelo, Remmer and Walsh. The resignation of Carl Atkinson was noted. It was noted that the deadline for ten electors to request that the vacancy due to the resignation of Phil Maude be filled by election was 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and that this vacancy could now be filled by co-option.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST.** Cllr. Dales declared an interest in a matter raised during the public participation relating to Scholes Lodge field. Cllr Hassell declared an interest in item 7.1 as an allotment holder, both were granted dispensation to speak.

**3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were two residents present who raised the following matters;

- The residents had been in the Parish Council (PC) garage and noted that apart from a set of portable goals, there was lots of unused space and asked if they could store tables (due to be used for the Platinum Jubilee event on Scholes Lodge farm field) in the garage. They also expressed concerns about the lock to the garage. It was reported that the Maypole Committee had expressed an interest in the garage. Their equipment was currently in temporary storage in a barn. A list of items placed in the garage would be provided.
- The residents also asked about additional cuts of three areas of grass on Scholes Lodge Farm field. They were asked to get quotations for the extra costs for the PC to consider and to mark the positions of all these extra cuts on a map. Cllr. Ward advised that the extra cuts had been included in the budget.

**4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.**

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the PC meeting (11/2021) held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (667-671) having been circulated, be approved, subject to the line in the crime report “Aberford Road and Cattle Lane. *She* also reported . . .” being changed to “Aberford Road and Cattle Lane. *Cllr. Cantello* also reported . . . “ as it wasn’t clear which Councillor the word “she” was referring to, all in favour.

**5 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk had received a telephone call from a Barwick resident concerned that many of the parking bays in front of the parade of shops are occupied throughout the day by members of staff of one of the units and asking if time restrictions could be implemented on those parking in this area. Ward Cllr. Robinson had been made aware and was pressing Highways for time-restricted parking to be introduced. The caller had made themselves known to the Clerk but asked that their identity not to be disclosed further. Cllr. Ward suggested that the PC should not act on anonymous contacts as a matter of policy. The Clerk had since received another telephone call from a different resident expressing the same concern, this caller had not indicated any wishes to remain anonymous. Cllr. Brunt commented on the length of time the restriction should apply noting that customers of the hairdresser might not be able to return to their vehicle for a couple of hours.

## 6. ACTION TRACKER

The Clerk presented the Action Tracker

The following Had been completed since the last meeting.

- a. Internal Controls Officer to be appointed (item 7.1 below)
- b. Cookies Policy adopted
- c. Playing Fields Committees merged - the first joint meeting would be 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022
- d. The Post Office had been notified of the decision regarding the grant for the awning.
- e. The barrier report had been discussed at the March meeting, the barriers to be retained.
- f. The first meeting of the Equal Opportunities Working Party had been on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 and considered a four-page document. They had agreed to mirror the Leeds City Council (LCC) policy but excluding an equalities audit. A suggested policy had been circulated earlier that day.
- g. Hedge cutting at the allotments and tree work on Jack Heaps field had been done. The quality of the hedge cutting had been very good but some of the cuttings had been left on one of the plot holders plots. Another plot holder was having a bonfire and the cuttings were added to the bonfire a burnt.

The following were still ongoing

- a. Following visits by Cllr. Hassell and the Clerk to a branch of Lloyds Bank with proof of identity, the Clerk had received documentation from the bank which had been signed at the March PC meeting by Cllrs. Brunt, Hassell, Slater and the Clerk. These forms had been sent off and a response was awaited.
- b. Delays in newsletter printing and distribution meant that the published consultation deadline of 21<sup>st</sup> March had already passed by the time people got their newsletters. Nevertheless, several residents had completed the survey and Cllr. Brunt had circulated a summary of the replies earlier that day. Early indications showed a preference for recycled plastic and a desire not to have metal benches. This would be considered at the next Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee meeting. Any responses sent directly to the Clerk would be forwarded to Cllr. Brunt for inclusion in his summary.
- c. Cllr. Brunt was still working on the Strategic Plan and had now reached the last header. He would allow a further ten days and would then circulate accordingly and speak to each councillor in turn. This would then be an agenda item for the June meeting.
- d. Cllr. Cantelo had spoken to the Clerk earlier that day. There had been no progress regarding painting of the Railway Bridge since the last meeting due to her other commitments and she would endeavour to progress this in the near future.
- e. A tree surgeon had been asked to provide a quotation for cutting the elder tree on Scholes Lodge Farm (SLF) field but having walked around the field had been unsure which tree needed attention. Members of the SLF subcommittee provided clarification, the Clerk would pass this information on to the tree surgeon.
- f. Platinum Jubilee working party – technical issues forced the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> March by Zoom to be abandoned. Cllr. Ward had since received instructions from the Clerk regarding hosting a meeting. Another meeting would be attempted on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm using remote access technology. The Clerk was asked to book a venue for a meeting at the end of the month to bring together those organisations planning activities over the public holiday weekend. It was however felt that the PC already had enough knowledge about what was being planned to make such meeting unnecessary (such as the Historical Society giving guided tours of All Saints' church and showing films of previous Maypole raising ceremonies and the church bells being rung). Those planning activities we're looking to the PC to provide support in the form of publicity. Cllr. Slater was willing to put together an eight-page document. The Eden Project had put together a package of guidance for those planning events.
- g. Concerns raised in the Public Participation about Valley Side Farm. The Clerk had not had chance to pursue this since the last meeting. He would contact LCC Planning for clarification

## 7 OTHER ITEMS

### 7.1 F&GP Report

The draft minutes of the F&GP meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022 had been circulated and their decisions noted. It was **resolved** to accept a recommendation of the Committee to appoint Cllr. Ragg as the Internal Controls Officer, all in favour. Cllr. Ragg was thanked for being willing to undertake this role. It was **resolved** to accept a recommendation of the Committee to set the rental at £200 in the event that the allotment holders formed their own allotment association. The allotment holders would be notified accordingly. A formal contract agreement would be considered in the event that the allotment holders wished to proceed with their own association.

### 7.2 Overhanging branches on Hall Tower Field

Having established that the trees in question were not the subject of a tree preservation order and the landowner in question had given permission in writing for the tree surgeon to access his land, it was **resolved** to accept the quotation of £250 for the overhanging branches to be cut back, all in favour. the cost of this will be taken from the Jubilee budget.

### 7.3 “Vision” Project and administration and wording for the key fob deposit system

Cllr. Slater reported that the “Vision” project was coming to the end. The non-slip coating was due to be put down within a couple of days of the meeting. The benches had been delivered and then nets for the tennis court were in place. Access to the pavilion, tennis court and multi-use games area (MUGA) would be by key fob (which have an associated cost), the outdoor gym would be accessible at all times. The necessary software had been obtained. A proposed policy and a terms and conditions of hire agreement had been circulated ahead of the meeting and Cllr. Ragg had made some general points about this. Applications would be online, but a “wet” signature would still be required. Although it had been established that it was not essential, Cllr. Ragg expressed the view that she would like to see deposits managed in a separate bank account. Key fobs could be collected from the Pavilion when the Post Office was operating 1pm-3pm on a Thursday. In addition, Cllr. Ward was willing to spend two hours on a Saturday at the Pavilion for three Saturdays to issue key fobs to those who couldn't make the Thursdays. Cllr. Ragg suggested having a receipt book. It was estimated that each key fob application would take about twenty minutes to process. Initially there would be no booking system for use of the facilities though this could be introduced at a later date. It was **resolved** to accept the general policy and terms and conditions of hire agreement as circulated, taking into account Cllr. Ragg's suggestion of having an extra data protection clause, all in favour. Cllr. Slater would circulate a copy of the revised terms and conditions document to all.

### 7.4 Platinum Jubilee – purchase of mugs and bunting

Various options for Platinum Jubilee merchandise for local children were considered. Pin badges were not allowed nor were pendants as these present a choke hazard (unless there is a Velcro or similar fastener). Mugs (from £2.65 each) and water bottles (£1.12) were both considered acceptable. It was noted that many of the children who attend Barwick and Scholes primary schools are not resident in the Parish and similarly, several children who are resident in the Parish, attend private schools or are home schooled. It was **resolved** that a budget of up to £3,000 including Value Added Tax (VAT) be allocated for the purchase of Platinum Jubilee merchandise for local children, all in favour. At its meeting next week, the F&GP Committee would consider which items would be bought and where they would be distributed. There was discussion about bunting, Barwick's estimated need was for 200 metres of bunting at about £1 a metre. For Scholes, consideration was given to buying the material (cotton and tape) for event organisers to make their own. This would cost about £8.50 per linear metre (the material being 1.2 metres wide), however it was felt that buying readymade bunting was the better option. It was **resolved** to set a budget of up to £300 per village for bunting.

### **7.5 Drainage for Scholes Football field**

Two quotations were considered, one for £19,386 + VAT and one for £31,873 + VAT. Former councillor Maude had investigated the legal position and Cllr. Remmer had looked into the practicalities. This would be paid for from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money. Nevertheless, there were concerns that only a relatively small number of people would benefit from this. This would be considered further by the F&GP Committee at its meeting the following week and in the meantime, Cllr. Slater would circulate everyone a reminder of the formal resolution approving allocation of the CIL money to this project.

### **7.6 Leeds Festival Working Group**

The Leeds Festival Working Group had met on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 and had considered taxis and travel plans. Cllr. Dales requested the link to the next meeting.

### **7.7 Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA) spring conference**

Cllr. Hassell had attended the YLCA spring conference held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022. She had circulated a list of the presentations which were available via We Transfer. The file size was too great to circulate by email, however Cllr. Slater would be able to upload files to the members section on the website.

### **7.8. Website report.**

The Clerk had circulated a report showing the number of hits as of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 16:16. There had been 691 users in the last thirty days and 1,718 this year. The total number of users was 8,897. Full details available in the members section of the website.

### **7.9 March surgery**

Cllr. Slater had manned the March PC surgery held at Saint Philip's Church café on 26<sup>th</sup> March and circulated a report of issues raised. Scholes Cricket Club were concerned about divots on the pitch caused by dogs running across it. Cllr. Brunt confirmed that the wording of the sign simply asked that dogs be "kept under control". An approach would be made to Ward Cllr. Robinson.

### **7.10 Response to the statement by the former Chair**

Cllr. Slater read out a statement in response to the statement the former Chair had read out at the end of the January meeting. He subsequently circulated a transcript of his statement. The key points were;

- Six complaints about him made to the monitoring officer with allegations of bullying and harassment. The monitoring officer had ruled that these complaints were invalid.
- The close timing of these complaints suggesting collusion between those making them and making him feel bullied.
- The former Chair taking decisions without reference to other councillors (including instructions to the Clerk).
- An internal complaint made on 6<sup>th</sup> January still unresolved and lack of progress in implementation in drafting a revised complaints policy.
- Lack of progress with another complaint made to the Proper Officer.

He would continue as a councillor and endeavour to work together with the PC which is the reason for joining in the first place

Cllr. Dales responded and felt that the running of Hall Tower Hill had not attracted the same level of scrutiny as those for Scholes Lodge Farm (SLF) field. SLF subcommittee members had been challenged about registered pecuniary interests (in particular relating to employment) and she had felt bullied as a result and felt as though she was walking on eggshells all the time. She stated that councillors need to work together to make the Parish a better place.

## **8 PLANNING MATTERS**

Reports on the decisions of the Planning Working Party made at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March had been circulated.

## 9 FINANCE

It was **resolved** that thirty-two payments totalling £3,158.96 be approved, all in favour (ten direct debits totalling £395.10 and twenty-two BACS/cheque payments totalling £2,763.86). Cllr. Ragg had visited the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and noted that automated payments had always already been taken by the time of the meeting leading to these payments being retrospectively approved. She had suggested therefore that list of anticipated payments includes automated payments for the following month. As such, the payments approved above includes direct debit and automated card payments due after 1<sup>st</sup> May. The list also made provision for approval of payments to the Pavilion cleaner to be paid to the beginning of May. The list of payments included all those circulated with the agenda paperwork and one which had arrived subsequently (an invoice for Royal Mail postage paid envelopes of £3.36 + VAT). The RFO reported that his April pay slip would not be received until the new tax year and therefore the above approval did not take account of the additional hours agreed at the last meeting nor the back dated pay award. Retrospective approval was also given to three payments already made (Pavilion cleaner, five weeks - £75, automated card payments of £11.28 Microsoft licence and £14.39 Zoom subscription, the latter two being paid to avoid card fees). The RFO also reported receipt of precept and grant on 1<sup>st</sup> April. He also reported on the partial payment of £194.04 by Scholes Sports Association towards the unpaid ground rent and water charges from 2013/14 to 2015/16 leaving £142.51 still owed. Income in March of £18,966.91 included £17,100 the second instalment of the Veolia grant and £1,000 from LCC being the grant for the Christmas trees. Barwick sports clubs had been invoiced for their annual ground rent for 2022/23 and most had paid. The RFO would send similar invoices to Scholes sports clubs once he had calculated the amount owed for water. Cllr. Slater asked about the Clerk's salary noting that although the payment would be made in April and therefore taken from the 2022/23 budget, the additional hours and back dated pay award should really be taken from the 2021/22 budget (indeed there may be other payments approved in April for expenditure incurred the previous financial year). The RFO would seek the advice of the internal auditor. The RFO reported that he had begun work on the annual VAT return, there being almost £19,500 VAT to claim back. In doing the VAT return, he had revisited invoices and identified over £200 VAT not previously reported, the next income and expenditure spreadsheet would reflect these changes.

It was **resolved** that a bouquet of flowers with a message of condolence be sent to Cllr. Walsh following the unexpected death of her husband.

## 10 CRIME REPORT

In the absence of Cllr. Cantelo, and due to the lack of time available, no report was given. The next Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting would be 14<sup>th</sup> April.

## 11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates of forthcoming meetings:

**Annual Parish Meeting** – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 7:30pm, Barwick Village Hall

**Annual Parish Council Meeting** – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 8:30pm, Barwick Village Hall

**Barwick and Scholes Playing Fields Committee** – 11<sup>th</sup> April, 7:30pm Miner's Institute

**Finance and General Purposes Committee** – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 7pm, Pavilion

**Note:** The wording of agenda items to be submitted in writing to the Proper Officer at least ten clear days before a meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:30pm.

Signed

Chair  
9 May 2022