

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held on Monday 5th December 2022 at 7pm in Saint Philip’s Church Hall, Scholes.

PRESENT:

Councillor	Claire Hassell (Chair)			
Councillors	Alexandra Cantelo	Kinga Ragg	Jacqueline Ward	
	Karen Dales	Graham Slater	Gillian Williamson	
	Paul Remmer	Stella Walsh		

In attendance: One resident and the Clerk.

1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

The resident expressed concerns that insufficient use was being made of local contractors for jobs commissioned by the Parish Council (PC). She felt that local businesses should be prioritised as they have a vested interest in doing a good job. Members of the PC responded to this, Financial Regulations required that the PC should at least attempt to get three quotations for anything over £100 in value and sometimes getting any quotations from local businesses was problematic. Some local businesses had complained that they were unaware when the PC had jobs for which quotations were required. There had been attempts in previous years for local businesses to put themselves forward on a list of preferred suppliers to be contacted when quotations were needed but the take up had been poor. There was a suggestion that this be tried again and there would be articles in the newsletter and on the website to encourage local businesses to be added to such a register. Cllr. Walsh would ensure an appropriate article in the February 2023 newsletter. The resident reported on positive feedback from two other residents regarding recent work carried out on the flag stones near Crosland Mews. There was however, a concern that one trip hazard (the broken flag stones) had been replaced by another (the kerb necessary to keep the gravel in place). It was agreed that the resident be given permission to apply white paint to the top edge of the kerb. Meanwhile, the resident was thanked for planting three cherry trees in Scholes Lodge Field.

2 APOLOGIES. None.

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST. It was noted the Parish Councillor’s and the Clerk had received an invitation to Bramham Park on 7th December 2022 for drinks and canapés and that Cllrs. Cantelo, Hassell, Ward and Walsh and the Clerk were intending to attend this event.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the November meeting of the Parish Council (6/2022) held on 7th November 2022 (699-703) having been circulated, be approved subject to paragraph 8.13a being changed from “*There how to pin concerns . . .*” to “*There had been concerns . . .*”.

5 CORRESPONDENCE.

- 3204 was from a resident regarding the proposals for Hall Tower field and also with concerns that part of the monument behind the Black Swan was in need of considerable repair. The poor state of repair of the wooden fence, the gate and the information display board were noted, Cllrs. Cantelo, Williamson and a former Councillor having seen this for themselves. The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee reminded everyone that there was nothing in the budget to pay for any remedial action though such projects could be built into the three-year plan which she was working on. However, this was not PC land and belonged to a resident. The fence adjoined a public footpath and it was suggested that the Clerk contacts Ward Cllr. Robinson about this matter (or Heritage England if Ward Cllr. Robinson can’t help).
- 3205 was from a resident regarding the 20mph proposals with particular concerns about Long Lane and Aberford Road and suggesting raised humps similar to those near John Smeaton school. The Clerk would reply to the resident suggesting they respond using the published consultation process.

- 3206 was from a former Parish Councillor who had been tidying his property and found a box of the book “Walks round Barwick and Scholes” by the late Alan Senior and asking the PC for suggestions regarding their usage. Cllr. Walsh said she would take some to the library and to the church. About a third of the walks described in the book were affected by the completion of the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR) and therefore an insert into each book to explain this would be required. It was agreed that the author's widow be contacted to clarify her wishes regarding the books.
- 3207 was from a resident suggesting biomass generators or wind turbines for the villages. This had been considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Cllr. Walsh had sent the Clerk details of their discussions which he would use to formulate a response to the resident.
- 3208 was from Scholes Bowling Club regarding proposals for a playground in Scholes Playing Fields.
- 3203 was from an allotment holder making a complaint about abusive behaviour from another plot holder. The allotment holder had already reported this incident to the Police. The Clerk would write to all plot holders to remind them of condition 5(v) in the rental agreement (not causing any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment garden).
- 3202 was from a resident concerned about bird droppings from beech trees on PC land overhanging their property. The Leeds City Council (LCC) tree officer had been contacted. The Clerk would confirm that the PC had done everything possible and was not considering any further action to address these concerns.

6 ACTION TRACKER

The Clerk presented the Action Tracker.

- Railway Bridge – the Clerk had emailed Historic Railways England on 15th November suggesting that if they supplied the appropriate type of paint, the PC would organise a team of volunteers to carry out the work (being mindful of the appropriate health and safety considerations). They had replied to say that the painting of the bridge was not a priority. Meanwhile, a Scholes resident had been exchanging emails with Leeds City Council, in particular, Ward Cllr. Harrington in order to move this forward, Ward Cllr. Stephenson had also been approached. This would be an agenda item at the Outer North-East meeting on 12th December 2022.
- Complaints Policy – agenda item this time.
- Correspondence item 3181 was from a Barwick resident concerned about road safety on Barwick Main Street and the lack of a pedestrian crossing. The Clerk had chased this up on 15th November and was awaiting a reply. Meanwhile, earlier that day, the resident had emailed the Clerk for an update and he would respond accordingly.
- 20mph consultation – at the November PC meeting, the Clerk was asked to make further representations regarding Leeds Road, a reply was drafted and sent to Cllr. Remmer 15th November as the Councillor most aware of the issues for comment before submission who confirmed that the suggested response was fine.
- Flagstones on Crosland Mews – the work had been completed and there was satisfaction with the quality of the work done - see public participation (above).
- Gate at the entrance to Scholes Lodge Field – agenda item this time.
- Plaques for the “Tommy” silhouette statues - Cllr. Walsh had contacted Andrew (Monumental Masons) but there had otherwise been no progress since the November meeting.
- Cutting back of laurel trees, rose and hebes on the land adjacent to Crosland Mews - on 3rd November 2022, the Clerk had sent an email with a Google maps link to Leeds City Council, ENE Locality Team, eneaction@leeds.gov.uk
- Graffiti on ELOR - the Graffiti was still there and was now enhanced by lighting on the bridge. This was ongoing with the ELOR team and Cllr. Remmer would keep pressing for action to be taken. There was also graffiti at Chippendale’s quarry.
- Consultation leaflet with proposals for a playground for seven to twelve-year-olds near the football pitch Scholes - Cllr. Ragg reported that she had had feedback on the consultation leaflet which Cllr. Slater had produced from Cllr. Remmer. Cllr. Walsh would resend the feedback that she had provided. There had been no progress regarding consultation with the children who might use the facility. This would be deferred to the New Year and Councillors were encouraged to submit feedback

if they had not already done so. It was noted that the land had historically been purchased by a local farmer for use as a playground. It was suggested that Cllr. Ragg circulates a draft consultation leaflet.

- PC support of residents in the event that the electricity supply is turned off due to the energy crisis - Scholes Community Care were not doing anything in this regard but Manor House was being used and the heating was on. Other venues offering social activities in a warm environment included Barwick Village Hall, the John Rylie Centre and the Methodists and some of these events had been advertised in the newsletter.

7 OTHER ITEMS

7.1 Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee. The draft minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting of 11th November 2022 had been circulated. The Committee were recommending that £300 be paid to the local branch of the Royal British Legion as part of the 2022 Remembrance Day commemoration. An amended proposal that this be reduced to £200 was not supported and it was **resolved** to accept the recommendation of the Committee. It was noted that's the PC had passed a resolution at a previous meeting to make a donation of £200 to the Royal British Legion without the need for this to be an annual agenda item.

7.2 Scholes Lodge Farm

It was noted that the Scholes Lodge Farm subcommittee met on 24th October 2022 and it was agreed to defer the following two items until after the subcommittee had next had a meeting.

- a. A proposal that the subcommittee also has responsibility for the maintenance of Hall Tower Field.
- b. To consider whether the event being planned for 2023 would be a private event or a PC event (costs awaited).

A quotation for a new gate at the entrance to the field had been received from a local contractor who had given options for softwood and hardwood. It was agreed that hardwood was the preferred option, and it was noted that Financial Regulations required two more quotations to be sought. It was felt that the gate would last another year allowing grant funding applications to be made to the Community Fund and for MICE (Members Improvements in the Community and the Environment) money to be applied for. The supplier of the boardwalk would be asked to give a quotation and a local fencing firm was also suggested. This agenda item would be deferred for a year. Cllr. Cantelo knew someone who could give a quotation and Cllr. Remmer would measure up and send her the sizes required.

7.3 Pavilion Subcommittee Terms of Reference

Following the November meeting, revised terms of reference had been circulated taking into account Councillor feedback. It was **resolved** to accept the revised terms of reference for the Subcommittee subject to paragraph 3e being changed from "if just cause if found" to "if just cause is found", all in favour.

7.4 Commemoration benches

It was noted that two benches were being supplied to the Parish courtesy of the Ward Councillors which would be considered PC assets. These had originally been intended to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II but were now instead being used to commemorate her long reign. A location in Scholes (twenty metres west of the lollipop crossing point) and a location on Jack Heaps Field near the playground were suggested. It was agreed that these locations be marked using satellite view from an online map and that these be posted on social media.

7.5. Safeguarding policy

The safeguarding policy of a nearby town council had been circulated as an example. The award of a grant from the Well-Being Fund by LCC for the defibrillator was conditional on the Parish having such a policy in place. It was felt that the example circulated needed to be slimmed down to take out references to processes which were not relevant to the PC such as safeguarding training and taking into account that DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks were not always necessary. Cllr. Remmer agreed to produce a draft policy for consideration next time.

7.6 Complaints procedure

Following the November meeting, the Clerk had circulated a draft policy which was considered by the meeting. Various changes were suggested, e.g. amendments to bullet point 4 under the “Aim of the Complaints Procedure” section, removal of the first paragraph of bullet point 2 under the “What is a Complaint?” section and to be specific about acknowledgement time scales, i.e. ten working days. A revised draft policy with these amendments would be circulated for consideration next time.

7.7 Scholes Cricket Club in their letter of 1st November 2022.

The concerns expressed by Scholes Cricket Club in their letter were considered. There were three concerns, people exercising their dogs across the pitch, installation of drainage channels on the football pitch (overlapping with their outfield) and people moving the portable goal posts onto the outfield. Considerable work had been done to make good the drainage channels, two tons of topsoil containing grass seed had been put into the channels in October and the grass was now two inches tall. Another three tons of topsoil was needed. The subsidence on the outfield had been addressed. A review of the situation would be carried out in the Spring. Regarding the spoil heap of clay and stones, a fence would be put round it (there was orange plastic fencing in the PC garage) and “No Access” signs put up. Regarding people exercising their dogs, it had been suggested at the Playing Fields Committee that the Cricket Club protect the wicket with fencing in similar manner to that done by Barwick Cricket Club but Scholes Cricket Club had been unwilling to consider this. There was a public footpath running alongside the cricket pitch making dog exclusion difficult (though there were sheep in the next field). It was suggested that signs be put up requiring dogs to be kept on a lead.

7.8 Grant application from Barwick in Bloom

A grant application had been received from Barwick in Bloom for £1,200 for a strimmer and a trimmer and it was **resolved** to award them a grant of this amount. Although this grant was awarded, it was noted that the PC grant application process required applicants to demonstrate that the applicant had already applied to the Community Fund, this was not the case for this grant application and future awards should be in line with the PC grants policy.

7.9 Appeal against refusal to supply information made under a Freedom of Information request

A resident had appealed against a decision to refuse his Freedom of Information request on the grounds that it was vexatious. He had requested copies of all internal correspondence relating to distribution of water bottles at the June PC meeting and the Clerk had received instruction from the Staffing Committee to decline the request for the reason stated above. It was **resolved** to uphold the decision to refuse this information. The Clerk was asked to calculate the total number of hours spent in dealing with Freedom of Information requests from this resident.

7.10. Grant application process

Following the extraordinary PC meeting, the Clerk had circulated a draft amendment to the Financial Regulations regarding the process for grant applications made by (or on behalf of) the PC. Suggested changes were made to paragraphs, one, two and three. A revised draft amendment to the Financial Regulations with these amendments would be circulated for consideration next time.

7.11 Reports of meetings/training attended

Cllr. Cantelo had attended a “Data Protection essentials” course on 16th November 2022 and Cllrs. Dales, Remmer and Slater had attended the Scholes Lane End drop-in consultation held on 22nd November 2022 and a copy of the proposed changes to this junction had been circulated to all Councillors.

7.12 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) usage report

Cllr. Remmer had analysed the entry/exit data which showed that there were eighteen different key fobs used to enter the Pavilion on twenty-nine occasions (excluding Councillors, the cleaner and regular hirers) and that the door had been opened with the exit button as late as 21:14. He would continue to breakdown the data.

7.13 Website and Social Media report.

The Clerk had changed the format of the report so that the figures in the November report were compared with the figures in the December report in order to show trends.

8 PLANNING MATTERS

The draft minutes of the Planning Committees held on 30th November had been circulated and the decisions were noted. There was one unusual application where the applicant had applied for works to be carried out on their next-door neighbour's tree.

9 FINANCE

9.1 Cash book and bank reconciliation for November 2022.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had circulated the cash book, bank reconciliation and budget monitor showing all income and expenditure to the end of November 2022.

9.2 Invoices and payments to be made for December 2022/January 2023

The RFO presented a list of payments for December. Many of these had been reported at the November meeting but were being reported again as follows;

- a. Direct Debits due for payment in December had been reported the previous month as some of these would have been taken by the time the December meeting took place.
- b. Some payments had been reported at the November meeting in anticipation of invoices arriving before the December meeting but the invoices were still awaited.
- c. An expenses payment to the RFO had been approved by two of the signatories but one reported an error message and although the payment appeared successful on the bank's list of validated payments, it hadn't shown as a transaction on the statement. The RFO had spent an hour on the telephone to the bank in order to resolve this. The bank gave reassurances that if the payment was resubmitted, then the transaction would only go through once.
- d. The RFO had reported a £35 charge for a training course for Cllr. Slater. Those providing the training had been notified that his attendance at this course had been cancelled prior to the date of the course. The payment had been taken from the credit card. A refund was being pursued by the RFO.
- e. There was a room hire expenses claim which had not been processed as there was no supporting evidence. The RFO was pursuing this.
- f. Concern was expressed that due process had not been followed regarding the cost of the pay review into the Clerk's salary as this cost was incurred by the Staffing Committee without reference to the rest of the PC as they had no budget or authority to incur such a cost.
- g. Expenses to Cllr. Slater were waiting approval. Cllr. Remmer would deal with this.

The RFO reported on payments where invoices had arrived after circulation of the agenda papers, i.e.

- a. Scholes Lodge Field hedge cutting £70 + VAT.
- b. Annual renewal of the subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) - £222 but shared with another parish on a pro-rata basis making the Barwick and Scholes PC share £185.
- c. Yorkshire Water Authority for Scholes venues, £35.82 less credit of £114.28 leaving a credit balance of £78.46.
- d. Scholes Lodge Field Cherry Trees - £131.25 + VAT.
- e. Information Commissioner's Office annual data protection registration £35 (taken 5th December 2022 by direct debit).
- f. Flagstones at Crosland Mews - £1,150 + VAT.
- g. Two refunds of Pavilion deposits – £50 each.
- h. The RFO also reported receipt of his pay slip which showed a larger amount than previously reported due to a cost of living pay award back dated to April.

Cllr. Slater commented that the reporting of the refund of Pavilion hire deposits needed distinct reporting in similar manner to the reporting of these on the breakdown of income. He also drew attention to the fact that the cleaner had been unable to attend one week in November and therefore the invoice for her services should be £72 not £90 as reported.

Excluding the payments mentioned above, there were nine other newly reported payments to be paid by bank transfer totalling £633.68 and six payments to be taken automatically in January totalling £246.66

9.3 Appointment of an Internal Auditor.

That was insufficient time left to consider this and therefore this was deferred to the January meeting where it would be higher up the agenda. Meanwhile the RFO would ask a former Councillor with audit experience for the names of anyone else who could be approached.

10 CRIME REPORT

Cllr. Cantelo had circulated crime reports to everyone. There were still concerns about the speed of traffic on Leeds Road. Cllr. Cantelo advised that she had reported this repeatedly at the Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings and had been given assurances that Sergeant Jim Allen was dealing with this. There was also concern about traffic on the double bend on Potterton Lane and about motorbikes.

11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates of forthcoming meetings:

Parish Council – Monday 9th January 2023 at 7pm at the John Rylie Centre, Barwick in Elmet.

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Tuesday 13th at 7pm or Wednesday 14th December 2022 at 7:30pm in Scholes Pavilion.

Planning Committee – 4th January 2023, 6:30pm, Saint Philip's Church Hall, Scholes.

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 10:02pm.

Signed

Chair
9 January 2023