

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held on Monday 6th February 2023 at 7pm in Saint Philip's Church Hall, Scholes.

PRESENT:

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

In attendance: The Clerk.

1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

There were no members of the public present.

2 APOLOGIES. Cllr. Walsh.

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST. Cllr. Cantelo regarding item 7.2 as she knew someone from the Fair.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council (8/2022) held on 9th January 2023 (712-716) having been circulated, be approved and that the Chair be authorised to sign.

5 CORRESPONDENCE.

Three items were relating to Scholes Sports field;

- 3216 was from a resident regarding the drainage work done on the football pitch and the spoil heap of clay, the portable goal posts, dead hedge material and an unemptied bin.
- 3218 was from Scholes Cricket Club regarding the issues raised in their letter dated 1st November.
- 3219 was from a member of Scholes in Bloom regarding the bin on the sports field being used by dog walkers for disposal of poo bags.

There was discussion about way to control dogs on the field (including banning them). Locking the gate had proved very unpopular when tried in the past and it was suggested that laminated signs be put up at either end of the field warning those who use the field that the gate would be locked and dogs would be banned if there was no improvement. The Clerk was still investigating whether Leeds City Council (LCC) byelaws applied to the field and that afternoon had received an email from the area manager for the Cleaner Neighbourhoods Team (CNT) wanting to discuss this by telephone. Meanwhile, the Clerk would see if the LCC dog warden was available for a visit. It was not possible to put a fence between the public right of way and the field due to the costs involved. It had been established that the bin on the sports field belonged to Scholes in Bloom. Cllr. Slater had burnt a quantity of dead hedge material, however, some of the more recent hedge cuttings were leylandii and as none of the nearby trees were of this type, must therefore have been dumped by Scholes in Bloom. It was agreed that the Clerk write to them pointing out that the dumping of hedge clippings constituted fly tipping and requesting them to remove the bin.

Discussion about the spoil heap would be considered as part of agenda item 7.4.

- 3219 was from a resident regarding the removed basket swing at Barwick playground. The Clerk had exchanged emails with this resident (who had sent photographs of disappointed children standing near the empty frame).
- 3220 was from the National Grid regarding improvements to the transmission system and creation of a new substation at Overton. This was outside the Parish.
- There had been an email from the chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group following drop in sessions. One of the issues raised was the poor state of the footway alongside the road between the two villages and the email suggested that the PC write in the strongest possible terms to LCC to ask

that a highway maintenance gang be sent to cut back the vegetation so as to increase the width of the path and make it more suitable for use by residents.

6 ACTION TRACKER

The Action Tracker had been circulated to all and progress on various items was noted.

- Correspondence item 3204 (Concerns about the poor state of repair of the Ancient Monument, in particular the state of the path forming the public right of way from the public house car park to Meadow View and the broken fence). The Clerk had had a reply from the LCC public rights of way officer (19th December) suggesting that this be taken up with Heritage England. It was agreed that the Clerk establishes ownership of the land via the Land Registry website. Barwick in Bloom had historically carried out maintenance on this land.
- A future newsletter would have an appeal for local contractors to put themselves forward for consideration for Parish Council (PC) work.
- The latest newsletter contained an appeal on the back page for more volunteers to help with deliveries. Already, two Scholes residents had volunteered and have been asked to cover the Milton Drive and Belle Vue Avenue rounds.
- Railway Bridge. There had been a Ward Members' Meeting on 18th January. Cllr. Slater had since spoken to Ward Cllr. Stephenson about this. They were looking to get a cost and proposed that if this was reasonable, a third of this cost would be paid from Ward Member's funding, a third from LCC and a third from the PC. The bridge was structurally sound, the proposed work was just for the side panels.
- Correspondence item 3181 (request for a pedestrian crossing in Barwick). An email from a senior traffic engineer in LCC Highways had been circulated by the Clerk on 30th January and the resident made aware. He had carried out a full pedestrian crossing assessment on 24th November 2022 and stated that if facilities were funded the introduction of crossing facilities would be beneficial. This had been passed along to the review panel for the pedestrian crossing review.
- Internal Auditor – On 19th January 2023 the Clerk contacted three potential internal auditors and got a reply from one of them on 23rd January quoting £150 + VAT for 2½-3 hours work. He had accepted this quotation. One of the others had replied since quoting £170, he had local knowledge of the Parish having lived in Scholes for twelve years and his father had been a previous Clerk to the PC.
- Scholes Lodge Field drainage ditch. An on-site meeting had taken place on 3rd February 2023 with representatives of Taylor Wimpey. They had disputed ownership of the ditch and were considering taking out the fence and the hedge (until it was pointed out that the hedge was protected). The Clerk had subsequently circulated a letter from Taylor Wimpey where they accepted responsibility for the ditch. The meeting had concluded with Taylor Wimpey proposing to come back with a suggestion.
- 20mph consultation. Cllr. Cantelo would raise this at the next Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting and would email Ward Cllrs. Firth and Robinson and report back. This could also be raised at the next Outer North East meeting.
- Plaques for the "Tommy" silhouette statues. No report in the absence of Cllr. Walsh who was dealing with this.
- Graffiti on the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR). Cllr. Remmer was continuing to deal with this and was regularly sending emails. The problem was getting worse. There was a new problem of clumps of soil being dropped from bridges onto passing cars. There was also an issue with purple lights, LCC were waiting for parts in order to fix this.
- Gate at the entrance to the field. Deferred.
- Scholes Cricket Club letter of 1st November 2022. The Clerk had replied to this letter (hand delivered 4th January 2023) and had got a hand delivered reply on 18th January – logged as item 3218. This complained about the spoil heap and it was decided that further action awaits the outcome of a consultation process - see item 7.4 below.
- Strategic Plan. Cllr. Ragg asked for other Councillors to send her ideas and there would be a note in the next newsletter.
- Verity Strip. Cllr. Remmer had emailed the contractor for a revised quotation.

- There had been correspondence from a resident regarding four teenagers with three lurcher dogs who he suspected of hare coursing and lamping who was still awaiting a response from the Police at the time of his contact (3212). There had been further instances of this since the resident's email. Cllr. Cantelo would raise this at the next PACT meeting.
- Bank Mandate. Cllr. Williamson had agreed to become a signatory on the bank account and had provided a specimen signature.
- The location of the Commemoration bench in Barwick was considered, it was **resolved** that it go in Jack Heaps field along the wall adjoining Welfare Avenue) facing into the field.

7 OTHER ITEMS

7.1 Pattern of meetings for the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee.

It was **resolved** that F&GP meetings be held on alternate months on the Monday following the PC meeting on a trial basis to be reviewed if it was found that this wasn't working. The next meetings would be 13th March and 22nd May 2023.

7.2 Increase the rent charged to the fair who use Jack Heaps Field.

Following a review of what LCC charge fairs for the use of their land and noting that the rent charged to the fair had been £400 since the last increase in 2013, it was **resolved** to increase the rent charged to the fair who use Jack Heaps field to £500, all in favour. There was a suggestion that they pay a £50 deposit refundable when all the advertising signs are taken down.

7.3 Garage and the barriers in the garage.

The resolution of the PC in October 2021 to relinquish the rental of the garage and to purchase a storage shed for £600 was noted. Alternatives to the shed were considered, e.g. a pre-fabricated garage or a container if a suitable means of transport could be found. There were some concerns about security. Cllr. Cantelo volunteered to search for a suitable container and knew someone who would help to transport it. It was agreed to sell the barriers on eBay, the buyer would have to collect.

7.4 Proposals for a consultation on playgrounds for older children.

Cllr. Ragg had emailed a proposed consultation leaflet for playground equipment for older children in Barwick. The consultation would ask for comments on both the proposed equipment and on suggested locations (Jack Heaps Field or Hall Tower field). This would follow the same format and the consultation leaflet produced by Cllr. Slater (reported in the minutes of the meeting of 7th November 2022, item 8.1c). This would produce an eight page document which would cost £415 (based on the cost of a eight page newsletter). Scholes residents could also express a preference for sites (Sports field or Scholes Lodge field). To encourage responses, there would be an online form for comments and feedback which would be accessed from a QR code printed on the leaflets. Cllr. Ragg would send the Barwick consultation form to Cllr. Slater. The closing date would be 31st March. It was **resolved** to proceed as above, all in favour. It was **resolved** that the cost of the consultation comes from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. Drop-in consultations were suggested.

7.5. Scholes football field.

Cllr. Remmer had telephoned the company who installed the drainage channels on Scholes football pitch and spoken to the managing director. He had agreed to come back and spread additional top soil using a machine on condition that the PC buys the top soil. This item was deferred. It was noted that the same contractor had been contracted to carry out works on the playing fields at Scholes (Elmet) primary school. It was **resolved** that the school be given a factual appraisal of the work done for the PC.

7.6 Grant application for Hall Tower Field and the frequency of cuts to the field.

Cllr. Hassell had been completing an online grant application form for funding for Hall Tower Field from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and had pressed the key to submit the completed form applying for a grant of £3,000 for an additional cut and for repairs to the interpretation display board. As this was contrary to the recently agreed addition to the Financial Regulations (section 19) it was **resolved** to

rescind the application. If the closing date had not expired, then a new application could be made and a similar application could be made for Scholes Lodge Field for funding for events planned to commemorate the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, these applications would be made by the Clerk. It was noted that the same contractors had cut Hall Tower Field since the PC took on responsibility for this land in 2016. It was **resolved** that tenders be invited from grass cutting contractors who would be advised of the budget and asked to provide a quotation based on their expertise of the maintenance needs of the land (Cllr. Dales did not vote on this matter as her husband's grass cutting business was one of the contractors who could be asked to provide a quotation). Continental Landscapes cut grass for LCC including steep verges and may be able to provide a quotation for cutting the mound. Cllr. Ward had carried out a risk assessment of assets in Barwick and reported that a sign in Hall Tower Field was down.

7.7 Safeguarding lead.

Having adopted a safeguarding policy at the January meeting, it was **resolved** that Cllr. Cantelo be the designated safeguarding lead for the PC. Safeguarding would be a standing agenda item. Pavilion hire would be covered by the policy.

7.8 Tree survey.

It was noted that a professional tree survey should be done every seven years and the last such survey was done three years ago. A visual check by a competent person should be carried out once every three years. It was suggested that one of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group could do this, it was **resolved** that Cllr. Cantelo ask this person and provide them with a copy of the last professional report, all in favour. The Clerk would email her a copy of that report.

7.9 Cycle racks at the Pavilion in Scholes.

The cycle rack at Scholes Pavilion was sufficient for five cycles. It was a condition of the planning application that there be two cycle racks. It was agreed to make this into a set of two racks and to defer a decision on the rest to the next meeting.

7.10. Formal complaint from a resident against the four members of the Staffing Committee regarding the vote at the December meeting regarding his appeal against the ruling that his Freedom of Information request was vexatious and a related request for background papers and emails relating to that agenda item.

A resident had made a formal complaint against the four members of the Staffing Committee regarding the fact that they had voted at the December meeting to refuse his Freedom of Information (FOI) request on the grounds that it was vexatious. The original ruling had been made by the Staffing Committee and he felt that when the full PC considered his appeal, it was unethical for members of the Staffing Committee to vote in support of their original decision. Bullet point 4 on page 2 of the Complaints Policy states that the PC will consider the complaint and will also include on the agenda the appointment of three members to a committee with delegated power to continue handling the complaint (if necessary). It was **resolved** that the formal complaint not be upheld as there was an ongoing case relating to this matter with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and it was suggested that unless those external to the PC could be found to form such a Committee, it was inappropriate for Councillors to be involved. Four Councillors (the members of the Staffing Committee present and Cllr. Dales) did not participate in this vote (an offer was made by a member of the Staffing Committee that Committee members leave the room during this discussion, this was not felt necessary). It was felt that there were shortcomings with the vexatious policy and it would be an agenda item to review this at the next PC meeting. The resident had made further FOI requests for emails and minutes relating to the Staffing Committee's decision. Due to the nature of the business being discussed, minutes of meetings of the Staffing Committee are not taken but suggestions were made that password protected or redacted minutes would be better than no minutes. It was noted that in future, where there was doubt about voting on an issue, the matter be deferred whilst advice was sought. The decision of the ICO would be brought to the full PC.

7.11 Reports of meetings/training attended.

- **Community Building and Village Hall network meeting – 25th January 2023.**
- **Outer North-East Forum – 26th January 2023.**

Cllr. Slater had attended the above events and a written report of both had been circulated to all Councillors ahead of the meeting.

7.12 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) usage report

A report had been circulated to all Councillors showing that there had been usage 59 times by 24 people and that there was an upward trend in usage.

7.13 Website and Social Media report.

A report of website usage had been circulated to all Councillors.

8 PLANNING MATTERS

The Planning Committee last met before the January 2023 PC meeting and was meeting on 8th February.

9 FINANCE

9.1 Cash book and bank reconciliation for January 2023.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had circulated the cash book, bank reconciliation and budget monitor showing all income and expenditure to the end of January 2023. It was agreed that staffing costs be listed under a single budget heading.

9.2 Invoices and payments to be made for February/March 2023

The RFO presented a list of payments for February. Some of these had been reported at the January meeting but were being reported again as follows;

- a. Direct Debits due for payment in February had been reported the previous month as some of these would have been taken by the time the February meeting took place.
- b. Some payments had been reported at the January meeting in anticipation of invoices arriving before the February meeting but the invoices were still awaited.

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

- a. The RFO had purchased forty postage stamps for newsletter distribution (£27.20) and Cllr. Walsh had also purchased postage stamps for the same reason (£1.68).

Excluding the payments mentioned above, there were seventeen other newly reported payments to be paid by bank transfer totalling £4,234.39 and five payments to be taken automatically in March totalling £207.42.

9.3 Budget Matters.

- a. The RFO reported that the £300 given to the Royal British Legion has been allocated to the Grants budget (in line with the 2023/24 budget proposals) having been previously taken from each Environment Fund (as had been the case in previous years). This increased the funds in each Environment Fund to allow funding for the decision taken at the January meeting (item 7.7) regarding up to £250 for the cost of installation of the Commemoration benches. The Chair reported that new nets for the goal posts on Jack Heaps field had arrived (paid for from Barwick Environment Fund).
- b. The RFO reported that the newsletter was over budget. This was partly due to a newsletter produced in financial year 2021/22 (March edition) not being presented for payment until April 2022 resulting the cost of five quarterly newsletters coming out of the 2022/23 budget. There was a suggestion that the next newsletter contains an article reminding people who weren't using their key fobs that they could return them and get their £5 deposits back – this would be revisited in September.

10 CRIME REPORT

Cllr. Cantelo had circulated a report of the PACT meeting of 2nd February 2023 to everyone and a crime report for the Alwoodley and Moortown wards. There were concerns about items being dropped from bridges (see item 6 above) and about fly tipping. Fly tipping was bad at the end of Thorner Lane, especially

since the closure of the junction with the A64. There was an increase in reports of speeding, the Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) were dealing with this. Lighting was needed along the ELOR as it was very dark. James Gray (james.gray@leeds.gov.uk) was the highways engineer responsible for this road. The next PACT meeting would be on 16th March 2023.

11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Parish Council – 6th March 2023 in the John Rylie Centre, Barwick in Elmet at 7pm.

Finance and General Purposes Committee – 13th March 2023 in Scholes Pavilion.

Planning Committee – 8th February 2023 at the Miner’s Institute, Barwick in Elmet.

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 9:50pm.

Signed

Chair
6 March 2023