

**MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 at 7pm in Saint Philip's Church Hall, Scholes

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor	Paul Remmer (Chair)		
	Councillors	Alexandra Cantelo	Kinga Ragg	Jacqueline Ward
		Karen Dales	Graham Slater	Gillian Williamson

**In attendance:** Two residents and the Clerk.

**1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

There were two residents present who had concerns regarding the Friends of Scholes Lodge Field event being planned for 10<sup>th</sup> June. They contested a couple of the decisions made about this event. They had a concern that the Parish Council (PC) were intending to make a charge for the hire of the field for this event. They had received a user agreement from Cllr. Walsh. They had taken advice from a former Councillor who had been involved when the land was given to the PC which suggested that a condition of the land being given to the PC was that the PC could not make a profit from this. The charge was a nominal 1p for legal reasons. The agreement required the organisers of the event to ensure that the field was left in the same condition as it was before the event (e.g. not allowing the type of barbeques which leave burn marks on the grass). The hirers were organising their own insurance cover. There was a concern that where two different insurers cover the same risk, then in the event of a claim neither would pay out. Following the March meeting, the Clerk had emailed the PC insurance for advice and was waiting a reply. The organisers would be covered by the PC insurance if they signed up to the PC Volunteer Policy. It was hoped that this would become a regular event (as Scholes no longer has a gala). It was confirmed that the event organisers did not need Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks provided that children were assisted by parents. The performers were all DBS checked and one was a first aider. They asked if the grass could be cut about a week before the event. They would need a key for access.

Cllr. Remmer reported on a event he had attended in Saint Philip's Church Hall with Cllrs. Slater and Walsh. This event had been organised by members of the dog walking community who objected to the sign at Scholes playing fields requiring dogs to be kept on a lead. The responsible dog owners had agreed to keep an eye on the irresponsible ones and to pick up not only the dog mess of their own dogs but also that of the irresponsible dog owners. They would like a dog run and key fob access.

**2 APOLOGIES.** Cllrs. Hassell and Walsh.**3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST.** Cllr. Dales regarding grass cutting.**4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.**

It was noted that it was Cllr. Walsh and not Cllr. Slater who had agreed to draft the agreement referred to above (item 7.3). It was **resolved** that subject to this amendment, the minutes of the meeting of the PC (10/2022) held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (723-728) having been circulated, be approved and that they be signed in due course (Cllr. Remmer was unable to sign as he was not in attendance at the March meeting).

There was a retrospective correction to item 7.4 of the July 2022 minutes (page 690). This stated that it was agreed that the Scholes Lodge Field subcommittee also oversees the management of Hall Tower field and that a Barwick Councillor joined the subcommittee. It was agreed that this was not an accurate record of what was agreed.

## 5 CORRESPONDENCE.

- 3241 was from a Barwick resident wanting to set up a book exchange on Jack Heaps Field. The PC agreed in principle to having a junior bookcase in Barwick but had various queries and concerns, e.g. who would be responsible for maintaining it? Would the front be glass or Perspex? Had alternative locations been considered such as the John Rylie Centre or the Village Hall? Could it be allowed on a trial basis and then be reviewed? (e.g. six months). There were concerns about vandalism and that the books might end up being torn or thrown across the play area. The Clerk would reply to the resident to seek clarification of these issues.
- 3242 was from a Scholes resident expressing concerns about plants being dropped from East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR) bridges onto passing cars. It was felt that this was a matter for the Police rather than the PC. The Clerk would write to LCC Highways to express concerns about this and about graffiti.
- There had also been an email from the Group Scout Leader of Scholes 1<sup>st</sup> Scouts regarding a tree on the boundary between Scouts and Cricket which had fallen down. This had been addressed but the Group Scout Leader was seeking reassurances that the other trees were safe. These trees had been planted by the Cricket club. The terms of the lease for both groups specified that they had responsibility for their own boundaries. The Clerk had emailed members of the Cricket club asking permission for their email addresses to be disclosed to the Scouts and was awaiting a reply. He would meanwhile send a courtesy email to the Group Scout Leader who was anxious that he had not heard anything further. Cllr. Cantelo taken a picture when she had carried out a visual inspection of trees on PC land.

## 6 ACTION TRACKER

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

- a. Railway Bridge. Since the last meeting, there had been an email from Ward Cllr. Ryan Stephenson which stated that the estimated cost of the repainting was £6,000. A previous communication had suggested that the PC contributes a third of the total cost.
- b. Sale of barriers – the listed price had been reduced from £90 to £75 as there had been no meaningful interest to date. They would be reduced further in due course if there was still no interest at the new price. There was a view that the auction sites on which they were listed targeted the wrong market and there was a suggestion that they be sold as an auction rather than a fixed price.
- c. Garage. The Clerk had moved all contents of the garage small enough to fit into his car to the Pavilion. Cllr. Remmer would get a van from his place of work to move the larger items. The Clerk had emailed one of the Friends of Scholes Lodge Field to ask her to remove the tables etc. belonging to that group which were stored in the garage.

## 7 OTHER ITEMS

### 7.1 Grass Cutting quotations.

The Clerk had attempted to get quotations for grass cutting of the mound and the flat areas of Hall Tower Motte and Bailey and for cutting the grass on Scholes Lodge Field. Four new contractors had been given opportunity to quote for this work and the existing contractors had been given opportunity to confirm their prices for 2023.

- a. Hall Tower Mound. The existing contractor had increased his price for 2023 to £821.94 + VAT per cut (using a robomower). There was another quotation for £310 + VAT per cut using strimmers (and blowers to clear the path). It was **resolved** to accept the latter quotation subject to production of appropriate documentation (i.e. evidence of public liability insurance, employers liability insurance, method statements and risk assessments). A short contract would be put together.
- b. Hall Tower Flat. The total Hall Tower budget was £1,895 and having agreed to the above resolution, there was £965 left in the budget. £200 would be earmarked for other works (e.g. control of brambles and nettles) leaving £765 for cutting the flat. The existing contractor had confirmed that he would be holding his price at £155. There had been one other quotation of £110 + VAT. The latter was subject to conditions, in particular there being seven to ten cuts. It was **resolved** that as the quotations were

not like for like, the Clerk should write to both contractors asking them to confirm their prices for six cuts. Cllr. Dales did not vote – see item 3 above.

- c. Scholes Lodge Field. There had been no new quotations. The existing contractor had increased his prices to £300 per cut. The budget for 2023/24 was £1,898 which meant that if the field was cut six times, there would be very little in the budget for anything else. There was a suggestion that some parts of the field be left wild to reduce the area being cut. This would be discussed at the next Scholes Lodge Field subcommittee meeting and Cllr. Remmer would call one soon.

## **7.2 Vexatious Policy, Freedom of Information Policy and Model Publication Scheme.**

Following the decision at the March meeting (item 7.2 refers) the Freedom of Information Policy and the Model Publication Scheme were reviewed. It was **resolved** to adopt both documents without further amendment other than ensuring that the charge for the photocopying of information be consistent across both documents at 10p per single A4 size sheet. It was **resolved** to adopt the Vexatious Policy with one amendment, the penultimate paragraph of page 1 to read “The Clerk will refer the matter to the Parish Council if there is reference to any persons including the Clerk, named Parish Councillor/s, co-opted members, or volunteer/s for a decision for their determination of what action to take for their determination of what action to take and to agree that the press and public be excluded if necessary.”

## **7.3 Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee.**

The F&GP Committee had met on 13<sup>th</sup> March, the draft minutes had been circulated and the contents were noted. The PC had been asked to consider any quotations for the repair of the sign but the Clerk had not been able to progress this since the meeting. The Clerk had met the Internal Auditor using remote access technology of asked for her views on using pro-forma invoices. He had also raised this at a remote access meeting with other Clerks hosted by the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA) and the advice had been that this was lawful but appropriate risk assessments should be done before paying someone ahead of work being done, i.e. ensuring that the contractor was a trusted supplier and consideration of whether there was any formal agreement in place.

## **7.4 Proposals for a new playground in Scholes for youngsters 7+**

Cllr. Slater gave a report based on the responses to the playground consultation. There had been 117/118 replies (some from Barwick). 96% of the replies agreed that there should be facilities for older children. Not everyone was agreed about the proposed location on Scholes sports fields, in particular, there had been objections from Bowling Club and Cricket Club and there were concerns about security and safeguarding. A serving Police inspector had attended the consultation event, his comments had been circulated as part of a report circulated to the PC ahead of the meeting. Previous experience from the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) had shown that there was a little anti social behaviour when the facility first opened and there was some litter. The were proposals that the area be fenced off and access controlled by a fob system. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and lighting could come from extending the existing provision from the MUGA. Planning permission would be needed and this could take six months. An alternative location on Scholes Lodge Field had been proposed as a second option. More work was needed to decide on the type of equipment which would be provided and an indication of what was proposed would be needed for planning permission. Suggestions included a pump track and a skate park. The school had suggested a zip line (insurers would be reluctant to provide cover for such a facility). Other suggestions included a ground level trampoline or a slide down an embankment. Most grant funding opportunities were linked to planning permission being granted. There was also a request for an off-lead area for dog walkers. Reassurances were needed regarding the use of CCTV (data protection concerns) and any decisions would need to consider maintenance. The possibility of a second phase of the project was suggested. There was a concern that the location would prevent the land being used for a full-size football pitch. The estimated cost was £40,000. It was **resolved** that appropriate steps be taken to move this forward.

## **7.5 Reports of meetings/training attended.**

- The Clerk gave a report of a remote meeting he had attended regarding off-peak bus provision of the 64 bus. In attendance were Ward Cllrs. Firth and Stephenson, the landlady of the Gascoigne Arms public house, two Aberford Parish Councillors and two representatives of First Buses/West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Key issues were running costs (£65 a hour to provide a bus service) and shortage of staff (vacancies representing 8% of the number of drivers needed across the city). There were concerns about connectivity and reliability. The new service, running from Aberford and terminating at Cross Gates had commenced at the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> April 2023.

## **7.6 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) usage report**

A report had been circulated to all Councillors showing usage in the month of March 2023, i.e. 114 uses by 35 users.

## **7.7 Website and Social Media report.**

A report of website usage had been circulated to all Councillors. There had been a modest increase in the number of views.

## **7.8 Safeguarding report.**

There were no matters to report. Cllr. Cantelo would produce a report of a DBS event.

## **8 PLANNING MATTERS**

The Planning Committee had met on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and the draft minutes had been circulated and the decisions noted. The Leeds City Council (LCC) planning portal had been down for essential maintenance at the time of the meeting and Cllr. Cantelo expressed frustration that the Committee were unaware that one of the applications considered had been determined by (LCC) before the Planning Committee had met and had therefore spent unnecessary time considering its position.

## **9 FINANCE**

### **9.1 Cash book and bank reconciliation for March 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 March 2023. The report circulated was almost the end of year final position and the Clerk reported on movement since the report was circulated, i.e. £1,000 grant from LCC Well-Being Fund for the 2022 Christmas Lights. Payments for the garage were ongoing (see Action Tracker above). It was suggested that an approach be made to Scholes In Bloom regarding sharing with the Friends of Scholes Lodge Field.

### **9.2 Invoices and payments to be made for April/May 2023**

The RFO presented a list of payments for April. The direct debits had already been reported at the March meeting and those due for payment in May were listed as many of these payments would be taken before the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

The RFO reported on one anticipated payment not shown on the list being an £890 invoice from the YLCA for the annual subscription.

He had received an email remittance advice from LCC regarding payment of the precept (£43,388) and grant (£1,351) due to be paid on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

Excluding the payments mentioned above, there were nine other newly reported payments to be paid by bank transfer totalling £1,796.23 and five payments to be taken automatically in May totalling £207.42. There were payments on the PC credit card totalling £86.06. It was noted that there was a credit balance of £346.87 brought forward from January 2023 from the energy supplier for the Pavilion. It was **resolved** to approve these payments.

### **9.3 Community Infrastructure Levy.**

It was **resolved** to confirm the decision made at the March meeting that the remaining Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money be used towards the cost of the playground proposals and if necessary, the Scholes Lodge Field entrance gate.

## **10 CRIME REPORT**

Concerns were expressed regarding anti-social behaviour following the completion of the ELOR. Fences had been burnt. The width of the track was a concern and LCC were refusing to put any barriers up. Ward Cllr. Firth had been pressing LCC for action. Cllrs. Cantelo and Remmer would attend a meeting about this. There was no camera provision. Scholes Elderberries had requested Police attendance at their meetings. There were concerns about badger sets.

## **11 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

**Annual Parish Meeting** – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7pm in the John Rylie Centre followed by the

**Annual Parish Council Meeting** at 8pm

**Planning Committee** – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 6:30pm in Barwick Miner's Institute.

**Playing Fields Committee** – 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 in Barwick Miner's Institute.

**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 9:40pm.

Signed

Chair  
15 May 2023