

## Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting Virtual Meeting

14<sup>th</sup> May 2020 7PM

**Present:** Cllr Britton (Chair), Cllr Smith (Vice Chair), Cllr Tagger, Cllr Thompson, Cllr Stones, Cllr. Stainer, Cllr Jackson.  
Clerk – Ian Thompson.

**In Attendance:**

No members of the public were present.

**2020-05-1 Apologies:**

All councillors present.

**2020-05-2 Declarations Of Interest:**

None offered.

**2020-05-3 Public Forum:**

None.

**2020-05-4 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting:**

Cllr Stones proposed and Cllr Thompson seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true record. This was unanimously agreed.

**2020-05-5 Clerk's Report:**

1. In last month's report the clerk stated that the regulations that had just been introduced allowed "virtual" meetings from the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2020 until May 7<sup>th</sup> 2020. On reviewing the legislation they do in fact run until May 7<sup>th</sup> 2021 not 2020.
2. Cllr. Tagger expressed a concern that official notices on the notice boards may well be missed by residents and offered to put supplementary notices at strategic points throughout the village hoping to attract more public participation.

**ACTION AT**

3. Notices publishing the fact that that there will be no annual meetings in May have been placed in the noticeboards.
4. The action to test emails to Cllr. Jackson was done and issues appear to have been resolved.

**2020-05-6 Correspondence:**

1. A "Service Level Agreement" from Wakefield MDC for grass cutting services has been received. The document was circulated to councillors well in time for discussion at this meeting. Cllr. Thompson asked for clarification about

this document. The chairman replied that it defines what areas of the parish Wakefield will cut and that there will be sixteen such cuts a year, at a cost of £946.90 plus VAT. The document also includes their terms and conditions. The chairman stated that the most important part of this undertaking is cutting the village field. He is uncertain as to how often they actually cut the other areas. He has on many occasions cut grass within the village himself including the old orchard. Cllr. Thompson stated that she was aware of a resident who would be prepared to cut these other areas and after some discussion she agreed to discuss this matter further with the resident involved. The RFO stated that there was an allocation in the budget for such work and anybody taking it on must be acting as a contractor and have appropriate insurances in place. Cllr. Thompson will discuss further with the resident.

#### **ACTION LT**

2. An email was received from First Impressions confirming that work to empty the planters was imminent.

#### **2020-05-7 Finance:**

Much of this section of the meeting related to reporting, reviewing and approving annual figures. The documentation supporting these figures will be posted on the Darrington Parish Council website in the annual returns section. The supporting paperwork had been given to councillors in advance of the meeting.

#### **2020-05-7.1 Annual Accounts:**

The RFO (Cllr Stainer) presented the annual accounts for the year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020. To summarise the council had an opening balance of £20,118.74, receipts of £14,702.51 and payments of £14,000.58. The resolution to accept the annual accounts was proposed by Cllr. Stones, seconded by Cllr. Jackson and the resolution to approve the annual accounts was passed.

#### **2020-05-7.2 “Certificate Of Exemption”**

The RFO moved onto review the various elements of the “annual governance and accountability return”. As Darrington Parish Council has neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000 the council is exempt from a full external audit. The declaration that this is the case requires a “certificate of exception” detailing income and expenditure to be presented to the council and once approved will be sent to the external auditors. The resolution to approve this certificate was proposed by Cllr Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Stones and unanimously accepted.

#### **2020-05-7.3 “Annual Governance Statement”**

Cllr Stainer advised that the internal audit is still required and that he has arranged with a qualified resident to perform this work. Cllr Stainer is confident it will be done within the required timescale and will report back at the next meeting.

The annual governance statement itself is a declaration that all elements of the statutory regulations surrounding management of financial affairs are being properly followed. The RFO presented the document to the meeting. Cllr Smith proposed the resolution to accept this statement, was seconded by Cllr Tagger and the resolution was unanimously approved.

### **2005-05-7.4 To Receive and Approve Payments Due This Month:**

The opening balance brought forward from March 2020 was £20,820.67.

There was one item of income in April.

<u>Income Source</u>	<u>Income Stream</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Wakefield MDC	Precept – Payment 1	£6,522.01

There were four items of expenditure in April:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
12.3.20	32-1920	Cheque 805	Mr Mick Britton	Refreshments for Highways Meeting	£10.60	£0
12.3.20	01-2021	Cheque 807	First Impressions	Hanging baskets and planters	£3,119.40	£ 519.90
9.4.20	02-2021	Cheque 808	Mr Thomas M West	Darrington.org.uk address 2019-2020	£55.00	£0
9.4.20	03-2021	Cheque 810	Mr Ian Thompson	Joining fee and membership of SLCC	£49.00	£0
				Totals	£3,234.00	£519.90

This left a balance of £24,108.68 at the end of the month.

Payments Due In May 2020 for approval

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
14.5.20	04-2021	Cheque 811	Darrington PCC	“Reading Rooms” hire for 2019-2020	£160.00	£0
14.5.20	05-2021	Cheque 812	Darrington PCC	S137 Grant Maintenance Of Village Clock	£104.00	£0
14.5.20	06-2021	Cheque 813	Came and Company	Local Council Insurance Policy *	£355.94	£0
14.5.20	07-2021	Cheque 814	Mr Thomas M West	Darrington.org.uk address 2020-2021	£55.00	£0
				Total Proposed Payments	£674.94	£0

\* Cllr Stainer is questioning the insurers to confirm that assets are covered. Public liability is £10 million.

Cllr Britton proposed the payments be approved, Cllr Smith seconded and the resolution for approval was passed unanimously.

Given this is the first month of the financial year the budget “forecast versus actual” was not reviewed in detail. Forecasted end of year figure is just over £22,000.

#### **2020-5-7.5 To Consider and Resolve Action on Wakefield MDC’s SLA for Grass Cutting**

Following on from earlier discussion the resolution to approve signing of this document was proposed by Cllr Britton, seconded by Cllr Jackson and passed unanimously.

#### **ACTION IT to return signed document to Wakefield MDC**

#### **2020-05-7.6 Accounting Statements 2019-2020**

This document presents all of the key values in the annual accounts. Its contents were presented by the RFO. The resolution to approve this document was proposed by Cllr. Tagger seconded by Cllr. Stones and the resolution was passed without dissent.

There is a statutory requirement to post a notice of public rights regarding access to the publication of the unaudited annual governance and accountability return. This year this notice must be displayed on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. The RFO stated that he intends to put these notices on the village notice boards on Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> of June until at least Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> of July publicising the public’s rights regarding this return.

Given that this was a “virtual” meeting it was not possible to provide “wet” signatures for the appropriate documents. The RFO will deposit appropriate documents with the chairman and clerk for signatures and process them once this has been done.

#### **ACTION PS**

#### **2020-05-8 Planning:**

Wakefield MDC Ref: 20/008844/TPO – 4 Ash Grove, Darrington. To crown, thin and drawback an elm tree adjacent to the property. The clerk had circulated photographs from the planning application to councillors. The councillors concluded unanimously not to comment on the application and leave it to the Wakefield arborist to judge.

#### **2020-05-9 Coronavirus Actions Update and Options:**

The clerk reported that:

1. There has been one additional volunteer.

2. The previously established relationships between volunteers and residents continue to thrive without our intervention.
3. A 90 year-old resident concerned that her grass needed cutting rang the help line number and it was worrying her. The chairman came to her aid and cut the grass.
4. There was a call from an elderly lady who can walk downstairs but not up. She called to say her stair-lift was “stuck” at the top of the stairs. The maintenance company was contacted and they resolved the issue very rapidly.

#### **2020-05-10 Road Works In Village:**

Cllr. Tagger expressed concern at the poor standard of recent “white lining” in the village following road works. After some discussion the councillors concluded that the reason for the inferior quality of work was almost certainly because of the social distancing being enforced within working environments and the fact that this work is normally done by two people. As a result the councillors felt no further action was appropriate.

#### **2020-05-11 Proposed Project Update:**

Cllr. Stones asked for a review of the requested projects. These include barriers at the end of the back footpath approaching the A1, beehives in the old orchard along with a footpath across the village field. Cllr Thompson raised the point that seats within the village field look “tired” and perhaps this could be an additional project. There has been no official statement from the village field committee regarding the proposed footpath request. Cllr. Stones will approach the chairman of the village field committee asking for a formal response. There was some additional discussion regarding potential financial assistance for other village field projects. The chairman stressed that no action can be taken based on hearsay and when the village field committee contacts the parish council with their decisions and any requests they can then be discussed.

#### **2020-05-12 Reports:**

School – Cllr Tagger reported they have been discussing the practicalities of opening on a limited basis in June should it be an official government request.

Gardening Club - Cllr Tagger has recently published another newsletter and widely distributed it. The club has been thriving and he feels this is a good way to keep interest alive and potentially attract new members.

Police – No communications have been received.

Newsletter: Deferred for the time being.

#### **2020-05-13 Carried Over Items**

Given the current situation with the coronavirus pandemic restricting actions and projects that might otherwise be progressing these items are minuted simply so as “not to forget them” when things return to normal.

The chairman reported that one of the items documented last month was to “tidy up” the notice boards and have one half for parish council notices and the other for residents and businesses own use. He has performed this task on both notice boards.

The remaining items are:-

- i) Parish Meeting and Annual General meeting
- ii) Litter pick
- iii) Speed strips installation and data analysis
- iv) Report from Wakefield Highways covering crossing in Estcourt Road, Marlpit Lane narrowing, 7.5 tonne signs in Valley Road, Unofficial lay-by on slip road and litter on the slip road.
- v) Enforcement of regulations within deeds of property by Wakefield MDC planning.

#### **2020-05-14 Minor Items:**

The amount of dog mess has increased hugely recently presumably as a result of people staying at home and walking their dogs locally.

Cllr Smith reported the landlord of the “Spread” has deferred leaving until December.

#### **2020-05-15 Date Of Next Meeting**

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 7PM.

The meeting closed at 20:35