

Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting Virtual Meeting

10th September 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 attended.

2020-09-01 Apologies:

Cllr Jones of Wakefield MDC.

2020-09-01A Declarations Of Interest:

None Offered.

2020-09-02 Public Forum:

No members of the public were present.

2020-09-03 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting:

Cllr Stones proposed and Cllr Staines seconded the proposal that the July minutes were a true and correct record. There was no dissent.

2020-09-04 Matters Arising:

- i) Insurance Company and asset cover.

Cllr. Stainer has had correspondence with the council's insurers who have examined the asset list and defined all but the defibrillator as "street furniture". The current level of cover for street furniture is £20,000 which covers the council's valuation. The defibrillator is covered for £5,000 – considerably more than it cost.

- ii) First Impressions related.

First Impressions have now presented the council's payment cheque and they have also filled the "missed" planters and flower beds.

- iii) Parish Boundary & Council Tax Boundary.

The clerk reported that after some investigation the planning department of Wakefield MDC use a different definition of properties with Darrington Parish Council to that used for precept taxation. For example the property at 1 Tumbling Hill is defined as being within Darrington Parish for planning purposes but not for the Darrington precept element of Wakefield's council tax billing system. The vast majority of properties are included in both and it is only a few properties at the periphery that show this anomaly. Cllr Tagger questioned whether this meant that the occupants of a few properties who are on our electoral roll list may be entitled to vote for Darrington Parish Councillors without paying the precept for the village. The clerk was asked to enquire of Wakefield MDC if this is the case.

ACTION IT

iv) Dog Mess In Old Orchard

A lady from the village is clearing the Old Orchard area on a regular basis. The area is clear and has been kept in excellent shape. Cllr Smith knows the lady and was asked to thank her on behalf of the parish council.

ACTION FS

v) Village Sign Update

At the previous meeting councillor's expressed optimism that vendors of village signs might well have a "complete" package including obtaining planning permission for such a sign. The clerk was asked to make enquiries and approached three such vendors. None of them offer such a service. During his discussions he learned that one of them include "sign design" as part of the quoted price. The process involves the council's representative and their designer being in regular contact with ideas and drawings being passed back and forth until a design is chosen. This company, however, have a twelve-month lead-time on deliveries. After some discussion the chairman asked for a councillor "own" the project and Cllr. Stones will lead this project. The clerk will pass on full details of his work to date. She will establish contact with one of the companies and discuss how best to get started.

ACTION VS/IT

vi) Field Committee Section 137 Grant Request

The field committee have been reminded that a formal case and request must be made before any consideration of a grant can be made.

vii) Flag-Pole Behind Spread Eagle

No further complaint has been made and it is known that it is not the parish council's responsibility to deal with this matter. Any complainant should make representation to Wakefield's planning department.

viii) Wakefield Planning Committee Complaint Update

In August Cllr Tagger had an apology from Jim Dickinson the planning committee's representative and that progress had been delayed because of the coronavirus situation. He assured Cllr Tagger that a reply would be forthcoming by the 4th of September. That has not happened. A further apology was received on the 7th of September stating a reply would be forthcoming within the week. This is a "stage 2" complaint because the original complaint was not progressed. Cllr Tagger suggests that if no further progress is made within the next week then the next logical step is to complain to the ombudsman. Cllr Tagger will continue to liaise with Wakefield.

ACTION AT

ix) Sheep on Land Adjacent To Slip Road

Since the last meeting sheep have been seen in this area. The clerk volunteered to discuss the situation with his contact in Highways England, to determine whether they are aware of the situation and have given permission for such a venture.

ACTION IT

2020-09-05 First Impressions Open Day & Winter Planting

Cllr. Stones attended the “First Impressions” open day. She reported that she discussed two matters with them. The first was obtaining prices for winter planting options within the village. For First Impressions to plant displays in the planters and flower beds the cost would be £702.50 plus VAT. To plant and provide full maintenance the quotation is for £1,217.50 plus VAT. Cllr Stones has costed winter pansies from a local nursery at £6.50 for eighteen. An alternative option would be with “our gardener” obtaining, planting and maintaining them. Cllr Thompson will ask the gardener for such a quotation.

ACTION LT

The second topic Cllr Stones discussed related to decorative Christmas Trees attached to lampposts. The Christmas Trees require a circular bracket for attaching to the posts. The brackets are £35 plus VAT, the trees are £38 plus VAT each. Any brackets purchased could be used for future years. Darrington has had issues with proposed attachments to lamp-posts in the past and it is imperative that Wakefield MDC agree to such attachments. First Impressions report that they are having discussions with Wakefield MDC relating to lamp-post attachment. The clerk was asked to contact Wakefield to ascertain their view to such attachments.

ACTION IT

The RFO confirmed both projects could be financed using the already budgeted funds for projects.

2020-09-06 Post Office Situation

The village has been without a post office for some months. Cllr. Tagger reported he knew of a gentleman who has been asked by the post office authorities to initially run one session a week in the village. The chairman reported that there has been an issue with the IT connectivity required in the Reading Rooms but that has been resolved. A more serious issue is that the Reading Rooms are “closed” by the order of the bishop. One exception has been made allowing for the building to be used by a qualified doctor for training of medical staff for coronavirus duties. After some discussion a formal proposal was made by Cllr Tagger that the clerk should write to the Bishop to consider making a second exception for the post office service and pointing out how important this service is to elderly residents of the village. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Stones. It was not unanimously agreed to but the majority were in favour and the clerk was instructed to send the request. The chairman suggested writing to Mrs Morrel the church warden who had informed him of the bishop’s ruling and copying the bishop.

ACTION IT

2020-09-07 Incredible Edible

Cllr Smith told the meeting about the “Incredible Edible” organisation which is a national social enterprise group with a Wakefield office. Their mission is to help local communities set up and look after communal growing areas. Wakefield have approximately a hundred mini plots across ten sites in the area. The organisation assists in finding suitable plots and with finding funding to cover materials for such things as poly tunnels. If the funds are sufficient they provide regular visits to review and advise on the “current” situation. They expect to include local residents and have it as a community project. Typically they spend about a year getting the project up and running and then their experience is that local momentum takes over and that the enthusiasm generated allows communities to continue with and expand the

project. Councillors agreed that this is a laudable project but were concerned that no land is available in the village. Cllr Smith replied that the “Incredible Edible” were particularly experienced at finding such areas and putting a case to local landowners. Cllr Stones suggested that the school might well be interested. Cllr Smith asked whether she could use the parish council as the sponsor for such a scheme within the village and received universal support subject to the caveat that once more detail is known it would be reviewed by the council. She will represent the council with the Wakefield branch.

ACTION FS

2020-09-08 Correspondence

- i) An email from Mr Iles of Wentbridge to the chairman and headed “environmental disaster”. His email including a photograph of the grass verge outside his property in Wentbridge and comparing it with his immaculate garden. Last year Wakefield MDC agreed to cut the verge outside his house whenever they were cutting the grass adjacent to the bus shelter on the old Great North Road. Mr Iles complained that despite the agreement being for ten cuts per annum, so far only one cut has happened and implored the Darrington parish council to contact Wakefield and ask them to do the cut. The chairman forwarded Mr Iles complaint via Cllr Jones to Wakefield MDC. Wakefield replied directly to Mr Iles stating that because of the huge issues with the coronavirus outbreak they have had to focus their reduced manpower on their top priority jobs and unfortunately Wakefield considered that the verge did not fall into this category. Wakefield did actually cut the verge on the same day as Mr Iles sent his email to the chairman!
- ii) The chairman received an email from a resident complaining about a “pig smell” on the 28th of August. The chairman made considerable enquiries from other residents none of whom experienced this smell and has replied that he would investigate with other residents. This investigation did not unearth others experiencing it. However, Cllr Tagger then reported that this calendar year, at his address, the experience has been that this has been a year with significantly greater issues than in others. The “smell” has been very bad practically every day for the last few weeks. Cllr. Thompson agreed with Cllr Tagger that she felt it has been bad. Cllr Tagger agreed to review the situation directly with the pig farmer to try to find out why this has happened this year as opposed to last year where outbreaks were few and far between.

ACTION AT

- iii) An email from a lady in Stubbs Walden who are about to install a defibrillator and as she knows Darrington has one she asked how it was insured. The clerk replied that is included as an asset in the parish council’s asset register and as such covered by the insurance company who provide the council’s insurance.
- iv) Highways England have contracted the clerk informing him that road works were imminent on the A1 from Redhouse to Ferrybridge and the clerk posted the content on the Darrington Community Facebook page.

2020-09-09 Finance

As there was no parish council meeting in August the July meeting gave the chairman and RFO authority to agree and make payments regarding any monies due during this period subject to their decisions being reviewed and endorsed at this meeting. The RFO gave two reports, one for July and one for August. Annual Grounds Maintenance

The opening balance brought forward from the end of June 2020 was £24,360.12

There was one item of income in July.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Income Source</u>	<u>Income Stream</u>	<u>Amount</u>
3.7.2020	Darrington Golf Club	Newsletter Advert	£50.00

There were two items of expenditure in July:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
9.7.20	12-2021	Cheque 819	Wakefield Council	Annual Grounds Maintenance	£1,159.02	£193.17
9.7.20	13-2021	Cheque 820	Nick Dyas	Gardening / Maintenance	£208.00	£0
				<u>Total Expenditure</u>	£1,367.02	£193.17

This left a balance of £23,043.10.

Two payments were approved by the chairman and RFO for payment in August.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
1.8.20	14-2021	Cheque 822	D Dyas	Gardening Maintenance	£288.00	£0
9.7.20	15-2021	Direct Debit	Public Works Loan Board	Loan Repayment	£1,104.17	£0
				<u>Total Payments</u>	£1,392.17	£0

The councillors reviewed these payments and agreed that the chairman and RFO's decisions were appropriate and formally endorsed them.

In August the opening balance was £23,043.10

There was no income in August.

There were two items of expenditure:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
1.8.20	14-2021	Cheque 822	D Dyas	Gardening Maintenance	£288.00	£0
1.8.20	15-2021	Direct Debit	Public Works Loan Board	Loan Repayment	£1,104.17	£0
				<u>Total Payments</u>	£1,392.17	£0

This left a balance of £21,650.93

Two payments for payment in September if approved at this meeting:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
10.9.20	16-2021	Cheque 823	Fiona Smith	Conference Call Charges	£22.14	£0
10.9.20	17-2021	Cheque 824	D Dyas	Gardening Maintenance	£88.00	£0

				Total Payments	£110.14	£0
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Cllr. Britton proposed payment. Cllr. Jackson seconded and the proposal was passed unanimously.

With the caveat that no decision as yet having been made on project spending the RFO's estimate for year-end finances is a balance of £22,323. This estimate does make an allowance for additional projects to be funded.

2020-09-10 Planning Matters

- i) 20/01246/FUL 5 Stone Mews, Estcourt Road, Darrington
Single storey outbuilding to adjoin the existing garage
This application was registered just after the July meeting and details were circulated to all councillors by the clerk. No councillors objected to this proposal and so no comment was lodged on the Wakefield planning website.
- ii) 2020/01727/AGR Grove Cottage, Great North Road
Erection of agricultural building for storage of produce
Details of this application had been made to councillors over a week ago to give them an opportunity to consider the application.
The council concluded "no comment" for this application.

2020-09-11 Reports

- i) School – no report
- ii) Gardening Club – Cllr Tagger continues to produce a monthly newsletter for members. A 2021 calendar is planned with Cllr. Stones having supplied many photographs of club's activities and members are selecting those they feel would be most appropriate for the calendar.
- iii) Police – no report
- iv) Village Field – Playing equipment on the field has been repaired by members
- v) Newsletter – Cllr Stones asked members to think about articles they might write for the next newsletter which she would like to have published well before Christmas.

2020-09-12 Carried Over Items

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

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.
- vi) Broken glass in telephone box housing defibrillator

2020-09-13 Minor Items

- i) Cllr Thompson raised a question from the gardener. He has asked if a grass waste bin could be provided. The chairman said that this question had arisen in the past but Wakefield had stated they would only do it on a commercial basis – and that had proved too costly. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide it.
- ii) Cllr Smith reminded the meeting that she had discussed providing “dog mess” bags. She has seen dispensers in other local villages. She has asked Womersley parish council where who supplied theirs and at what cost. She will circulate the answer. She also asked whether or not they have been effective in reducing waste.

ACTION FS

- iii) Cllr Stones asked about a Christmas tree specifically how tall it should be. The chairman replied 18ft as we could job it down to size. She asked about a date for collection and will approach Mr Morrell in the hope he will, once again, volunteer to collect it and the chairman confirmed that whatever date is agreed for collection he was certain volunteers would be available to help erect and decorate

ACTION VS

- iv) Cllr Tagger asked about progress regarding the laurels which exceed 3 feet in height in Wentworth Park Dive blocking the view of the church. The request to ensure that the residents conform to the deeds stating that such growth should be restricted to 3 feet was passed to the planning department via Cllr. Jones. The clerk confirmed the action is on the outstanding action. Cllr Tagger feels this is yet another example of planning not doing their job!
- v) The clerk reported that the dead tree at Ash Tree Fold has not only been chopped down by Wakefield MDC but also that a new sapling has been planted on the site.
- vi) Councils are required to comply with the “Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations which come into force on 23rd September. The clerk has only just become aware of this requirement and will check the Darrington council website to see if it conforms!

ACTION IT

2020-09-14 Date Of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 8th October 2020.

Meeting closed at 20:33