

Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 15th of July 2021 at 19h00

Present

Cllr Britton (Chairman) (MB)

Cllr Jackson (JJ)

Cllr Smith (FS)

Cllr Stainer (PS)

Cllr Stones (VS)

Cllr Tagger (AT)

Cllr Thompson (LT)

Ms. Jones (JJo)

In Attendance

Mr James Stephenson, Mr George Ayre and Mr Tony Hames.

Action

1. Apologies & Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Britton opened the meeting and drew the attendees' attention to the requirement to wear face masks when not speaking, use the hand sanitiser and sign in on the sheet provided, highlighting that any person leaving the room during the meeting would be required to re-sanitise on their return.
- Cllr Britton welcomed Mr James Stephenson from the Kirk Smeaton Parish Council, Mr George Ayre from the Wakefield Council and Mr Tony Hames to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.
- No declarations of interest were noted.

2. Public Forum

- Mr Stephenson thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and advised that he was attending on behalf of Kirk Smeaton Parish Council's Chair, Tricia Storey, who was unable to attend the meeting.
- Mr Stephenson highlighted that he was seeking support from the Council regarding an objection to an application for Wentedge Quarry to be extended to the size of 18 football pitches.
- Mr Stephenson advised that the application had already been approved – virtually – by the North Yorkshire Council Planning Committee on around the 18th of May 2021 and, once the approval had been granted, it was also required to be signed off by the CEO of the North Yorkshire Country Council.
- Mr Stephenson noted that whilst the second approval was being awaited, Nigel Adams, the MP for Selby and Ainsty, wrote to the Secretary of State, requesting him to call in the application for review.
- The meeting noted that the Secretary of State had reviewed the application and had subsequently referred it back to the North Yorkshire Planning Committee for a second review, and a hearing in this respect was scheduled to take place on the 27th of July.
- Mr Stephenson highlighted that only those that were intending to speak at the hearing would be able to attend, however it could be watched live on North Yorkshire Council's YouTube site.
- Mr Stephenson advised that the Kirk Smeaton Parish Council had been extensively involved in creating awareness of the application through voluminous flyer distribution across its own parish as well as Darrington, Wentbridge and Jacksons Lane and raising funds through JustGiving.
- Furthermore, an ecologist that was already conducting work in the Brockdale Nature Reserve had been brought on to assess the possible effects of the quarry extension on the Reserve.

- Mr Stephenson noted that the monies raised would fund the cost of the ecologist, that such ecologist would be presenting at the hearing and that any fund shortfalls would be covered personally by a few of the residents.
- Mr Stephenson advised that in addition, Laura Hobbs from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust would be objecting and highlighted that they have been involved in the previous objection as well.
- Mr Stephenson went on to mention that a representative from Plant Life would be objecting and presenting at the hearing, as well as Friends of Brockadale.
- Mr Stephenson highlighted that Friends of Brockadale own Thompson Meadow and were in the process of writing a book about the wide variety of plants and animals at Brockadale, which would be submitted to the Planning Committee in support of the objection, and thereafter made available to purchase by the public.
- Mr Stephenson confirmed that Tricia Storey would be speaking at the hearing and requested that the Darrington Parish Council also object in unity with the Kirk Smeaton Parish Council, as well as the Wakefield Council who had already objected.
- Mr Stephenson mentioned additional local prominent individuals that would be supporting the objection and highlighted that they had also gained more than 1 200 signatures in support of the objection via an online petition.
- Mr Stephenson extended an invitation to the Council to attend the hearing with Tricia Storey and to present the Council's objection.
- Mr Stephenson highlighted various additional concerns raised by Wentbridge residents regarding the application.
- Cllr Britton reminded the meeting that they had previously objected on the grounds that Brockadale Nature Reserve is highly protected, is one of the most beautiful areas of the region and is regularly used by local residents.
- Cllr Britton offered to once again object on behalf of the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Smith, and it was unanimously agreed by the meeting that an objection be lodged. MB
- Cllr Smith suggested that the Council include a summary of the application and objection on the Council website, to increase Darrington residents' awareness of the application and Mr Stephenson recommended that the Council obtain the relevant information from Kirk Smeaton Parish Council's website.
- Mr Ayre suggested that Mr Stephenson extend the request for objections to Selby's Parish Council, as well as any other Parish Councils in proximity of the Reserve and Mr Stephenson highlighted that the deadline for submission of Kirk Smeaton Parish Council's motion for support of the objection was the 22nd of July.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted the importance of increasing awareness and support of the objection with residents and suggested a less-subtle approach to do so, whilst also confirming his support of the objection.
- Discussion was held as to the various options available to increase awareness, and Mr Stephenson highlighted some of the frustrations that they had experienced thus far.
- Mr Hames undertook to source supporting material from the previous objection and to provide this to Mr Stephenson. TH
- Cllr Britton advised that he had been approached by the press for comment in this respect and he had responded with the same comment as mentioned in the meeting.
- Cllr Thompson queried whether North Yorkshire Council had followed due process in respect of the application, assuming that this included notification of the application to Wakefield Council, however Mr. Ayre advised that he was of the understanding that North Yorkshire Council is not under any obligation to notify Wakefield Council in this respect.
- It was agreed that Cllr Britton would attend the hearing on the 27th of July with Tricia Storey. MB
- Mr Stephenson thanked the Council for their time and support, and duly left the meeting.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Cllr Britton requested a change to the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that under Item 7 (Finance), bullet 8, the reference to “Community Instruction Levy” should read “Community Infrastructure Levy”. **JJo**
- Cllr Tagger requested a change to the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that under Item 4, Section vi (Bankswood), reference to “Yvette Cooper’s agent” should read “someone from Yvette Cooper’s office”. **JJo**
- Minutes for the meeting held on 17th of June 2021 were proposed by Cllr Stones, and seconded by Cllr Stainer, as a true and accurate record of the meeting. There was no dissent.

4. Matters Arising

i. Village benches

- There was no update as there was still no expected date of arrival for the benches.
- To carry over to the next meeting.
- Cllr Britton highlighted that a few days previously, whilst he had been cleaning and painting the village notice board, a certain resident had approached him and had proceeded to verbally abuse him regarding he and the Parish Council not pulling their weight around the village.
- Cllr Britton advised that was not going to be spoken to in that manner and he subsequently got into his vehicle and drove away, citing that it was never acceptable to be dealt with in that way.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that he had also previously had a similar type of engagement with the resident in question.
- Further discussion was held regarding the poor state of the notice board and Cllr Smith reminded the meeting that a review / replacement of the village notice board was scheduled for the following year.

ii. Milners Lane and footpaths

- Cllr Britton advised that there was no update in this respect as the Records Office was still closed and he undertook to visit the County Records Office as soon as it re-opens. **MB**

iii. Speed surveys

- Cllr Smith confirmed that she had emailed Martin Barnes (Commissioning & Delivery Manager for Highways & Transport Services, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council) on the 15th of June, asking if the survey had taken place, noting that she had seen the speed strips and querying the flashing “30” sign, as well as the fact that they are meant to receive data from that.
- Cllr Smith advised that she had not received any response in this respect.
- To be carried over to the next meeting.

iv. Darrington playgroup

- To be removed from the agenda.

v. Kyte steps

- Cllr Jackson advised that he had visited the Kyte to determine whether something could be done to improve the steps up to the restaurant, however nobody in the restaurant knew what he was talking about.
- Cllr Tagger reminded the meeting that the matter was not regarding wheelchair access, but rather about determining if there was a way to make the restaurant more accessible, whether this be via a ramp, or handrail, or any similar solution.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that it was the owner of the restaurant (Craig) that had indicated his willingness to support the village, to facilitate easier access for the elderly residents, who would benefit from being able to visit the restaurant for a cup of coffee during their walks.
- After some discussion it was agreed that the most appropriate solution would be to put Craig in touch with the person that had previously put-up handrails in the village.

AT

vi. Old orchard plants

- To be removed from the agenda.

vii. Reusing of planted primulas

- To be removed from the agenda.

viii. Advertising for local Post Office

- No further action required in this respect and to be removed from the agenda.

ix. Assessment of wooden bus shelter near traffic lights

- Cllr Jackson confirmed that he had assessed the shelter and believed despite it having shifted slightly, it remained sturdy.
- Cllr Britton agreed with Cllr Jackson's assessment, and it was agreed that no further action was required in this respect.
- Cllr Smith undertook to advise the relevant resident that structural engineers had assessed the structure and they did not see any need to take it down.

FS

x. Communication with Mr Tony Hames

- Cllr Smith confirmed that she had emailed Mr Hames to advise that there was no comment from the Council regarding the removal of the bridge over the A1.
- Mr Hames advised that he had not heard anything more in this respect from the relevant party.
- No further action is required, and the item can be removed from the agenda.

xi. Follow up on invoice for use of Spread conference room

- Cllr Britton reminded the Council that in terms of corporate governance rules, Parish Council meetings could not be held in a pub unless there was no alternative available.
- Cllr Britton advised that as there had not been an alternative in the preceding two months or the current month, the meetings had been held at the Spread, however with there being no meeting during August, he was hopeful (but could not guarantee) that the September meeting would once again be held at The Reading Rooms.
- Cllr Britton advised that with that in mind, he had requested that Andrew Johnson invoice the Council for all three meetings in one go.

xii ICL report submission

- Cllr Stones advised that Cllr Stainer would not be able to get hold of her contact for the ICL report submission, however she undertook to provide Cllr Stainer the contact details nonetheless.

VS

xiii. Appointment of internal auditor

- Cllr Stainer confirmed that Cllr Tagger had someone that would be willing to be appointed as the internal auditor.
- Cllr Tagger reminded the meeting that whilst the person in question was willing and able to take on the role, he was slightly apprehensive about the liability that he would be taking on, should there be any issues identified.
- Cllr Tagger suggested that it would be beneficial for Cllr Stainer to have a discussion with him sooner-rather-than-later as there had been no other individual identified to perform the role, should he decline the appointment.
- Cllr Thompson advised that there was information regarding the appointment of internal auditors in the Law & Governance Bulletin and undertook to provide this to Cllr Stainer after the meeting.

PS

VS

iv. Darrington Hall planning application objection

- Cllr Tagger confirmed that he had completed and submitted the planning application objection.
- No further action is required, and the item can be removed from the agenda.

v. Village field bonfire

- No further action is required, and the item can be removed from the agenda.

vi. YLCA programme

- Cllr Smith advised that there had been correspondence with Karen Mann regarding Mrs Jones attending the YLCA programme for clerks, however it had been agreed that an introductory one-to-one session would be more appropriate.
- Mrs Jones confirmed that the one-to-one session had been scheduled for Friday the 18th of July.

5. Correspondence

- Cllr Britton advised that the only correspondence he had received was from Tricia Storey and that had been dealt with in earlier discussions.
- Cllr Tagger advised that with respect to Bankswood he had been in touch with Yvette Cooper's office due to the anomaly that Parish Councils could not make use of the Ombud service and that they had undertaken to take on the issue.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that he had received a telephone call from Yvette Cooper's office, advising that Yvette had been in touch with Robert Genric, the Minister for Communities as well as a lady by the name of Amina from the Sector for Communities.
- Cllr Tagger noted that Yvette had requested a consultation regarding the anomaly that subsidiary councils had when lodging a dispute with a major council, in that as they could not make use of the Ombud service, what dispute resolution process should they be following?
- Cllr Tagger further advised that Yvette was due to write to the Chief Executive at Wakefield Met. to express deep concern that the matter had continued for so long, with no resolution, and requesting reasons for such delay.
- Cllr Tagger noted that Yvette was also due to query why communications from Wakefield Council suggested that progress was being made in this respect, however on the published planning website, the last action noted had taken place in 2016.
- Cllr Tagger noted that the fifth item that Yvette was due to query, was the status of the matter, as well as what the Wakefield Council was planning to do to resolve the matter.
- Cllr Smith read the email received by Cllr Tagger, from Yvette Cooper, regarding the action that she had taken thus far, as well as her commitment to keep the Council updated as to progress in this regard.
- Cllr Smith noted that correspondence had been received from a new resident who was concerned that there was hogweed on Back Lane and, although he had contacted the authorities in this respect, they had advised that it was not their land and therefore could not assist with the matter.
- Cllr Smith advised that she visited the location of the suspected hogweed with the resident, however upon investigation Cllr Smith confirmed that the plant was not hogweed but rather cow parsley, and the landowner had already sprayed all of it to destroy it.
- Cllr Smith noted that there had been a few items of correspondence from another resident, including concerns over Back Lane rapidly becoming overgrown in parts and not suitable for walkers, the narrowing lane structure along the A1 path from the Darrington Hotel, excessive overhang near the traffic lights by Marlpit Lane and the state of the house at the bottom of Southern Croft Road.
- Mr Ayre confirmed that he had received the same email and Cllr Smith confirmed that she had responded to the resident, advising him of the actions being taken by the Council in respect of some the concerns raised.
- Cllr Smith did, however, highlight to the resident that the Council could not do anything regarding the state of 2 Southern Croft Road, but she committed to raising it at the meeting for discussion.
- Cllr Smith noted that she had received a further letter from the resident advising that a skip had been placed at 2 Southern Croft Road and that the rubbish had been placed in the skip.
- Cllr Britton advised that he had also seen officials visiting the house and that the placement of the skip was likely a result of that visit.
- Mr Ayre highlighted that if the skip had been placed there by the authorities, it was likely that the owner of Southern Croft Road would have had to contribute to the cost thereof.

- Cllr Thompson raised the fact that there was a piece of fence broken along the ginnel that goes past her house and queried whether it was the property owner’s or the Council’s responsibility to repair the fence.
- Cllr Tagger confirmed that it was the responsibility and cost of the property owner to repair the fence.
- Cllr Thompson highlighted that she had also recently seen a horse go down the ginnel and expressed concern that should the horse get startled, it could injure itself and/or damage some of the walls along the ginnel.
- Discussion was held regarding the legality of horses being able to go down the ginnel and the possibility that the ginnel could be a bridleway.
- Mr Ayre highlighted that the location of all bridleways is recorded by the Wakefield Council, and these records are publicly available on the Wakefield Council’s website.
- Cllr Smith undertook to investigate whether the ginnel in question, was a recognised bridleway. FS
- Cllr Smith advised of correspondence received from a resident regarding the location of the dog bins and she confirmed that she had already responded accordingly.
- Cllr Smith queried whether the footpath along the A1 had been cut back by the Roads Agency yet, and after feedback that it had not yet been done, Cllr Thompson undertook to request Nick Dyas to do so. LT
- Cllr Thompson queried whether the excess grass cuttings, that were not fitting into the regular bins, would be removed by Wakefield Council providing they put them in the relevant bags next to the bin on garden removal day, and Mr Ayre advised that they “should” be doing this, but there was no guarantee that this would be the case.
- Cllr Smith undertook to place a post on the Parish Council’s Facebook page, asking if any residents of Estcourt Road would be willing to allow Nick Dyas (the gardener) to use the surplus space in their garden waste bins for grass cuttings from the verges along Estcourt Road and, if so, to please place a clearly marked label on the top of their bins. FS
- Cllr Smith advised that she had received notification that the planning application for a single detached house at Delph House had been refused by the Planning Committee due to the proposed dwelling having a significant impact on the occupiers of the neighbouring property.

6. Finance

- Cllr Stainer presented the June financial accounts, noting that the current account opening balance on the 1st of June was £35,718.67 and there were no items of income for the month of June.

10 items of expenditure for June:

Date Approved	Item	Payment Method	Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT
17.6.21	15-2122	Cheque 861	P M Stainer	Postage for Audit Return	6.85	-
17.6.21	16-2122	Cheque 862	D Dyas	Gardening/maintenance	240.00	-
17.6.21	17-2122	Cheque 863	Darrington Playgroup	S137 grant - Darrington Playgroup	232.80	-
17.6.21	18-2122	Cheque 864	Mick Britton	Gardening/maintenance	84.49	-
17.6.21	19-2122	Cheque 865	PCC of Darrington with Wentbridge	S137 grant - Maintenance of Village clock	104.00	-
17.6.21	20-2122	Cheque 866	P M Stainer	Printer ink	11.49	1.92
17.6.21	21-2122	Cheque 867	Mick Britton	Gardening/maintenance	145.00	24.17
17.6.21	22-2122	Cheque 868	First Impressions	Summer hanging baskets/planters	3,119.40	519.90
17.6.21	23-2122	Cheque 869	Avril Jackson	Gardening/maintenance - Plants	59.50	9.92
17.6.21	24-2122	Cheque 870	Avril Jackson	Gardening/maintenance - Plants	54.00	-
17.6.21	25-2122	Cheque 871	Glasdon UK Ltd	Dog Waste Bin	283.16	47.20
Total expenditure					4,340.69	603.11

- Cllr Stainer advised of an end-of-month balance of £31,377.98.

Payments to be approved for July:

Date Approved	Item	Payment Method	Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT
15.7.21	26-2122	Cheque 872	JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog Bin Stations	794.40	132.40
15.7.21	27-2122	Cheque 873	D Dyas	Gardening/Maintenance	256.00	-
15.7.21	28-2122	Cheque 874	Pink Spaghetti	Preparation of minutes	150.00	-
15.7.21	29-2122	Cheque 875	Wakefield Council	Annual Grounds Maintenance Contract	1,182.19	197.03
				TOTAL	2,382.59	329.43

- Cllr Smith proposed the payments be made and Cllr Tagger seconded, with no dissent.
- The Council approved that for the month of August and as there was no meeting scheduled for August, Cllr Britton and Cllr Stainer would be authorised to pay invoices due by the Parish Council.
- Taking into consideration anticipate expenditure, the RFO forecast a balance for the end of the financial year of £22,302.45.
- Cllr Stainer highlighted that there was potential for additional infrastructure levy income and, if this were the case, there would be an additional £3 250 in the bank account.

7. Planning Matters

- Cllr Britton noted that the request for removal of a sycamore tree near Police House on Estcourt Road had been refused without explanation.
- Cllr Britton advised that the application for construction of a farm complex on the land adjacent to the Kyte Hotel had been “finally disposed of”.
- After some discussion regarding the meaning of “finally disposed of”, Cllr Stainer confirmed that this meant that the period for determination and appeal had run its course and the application had therefore expired.

8. Reports – School, Police, Gardening Club, Village Field, Newsletter

School

- Cllr Tagger advised that the school was absolutely delighted and thankful for the support given by the Parish Council and that they would be sending photos to the Council.
- Cllr Tagger noted that the school had been required to send several children home due to a track-and-trace COVID alert and that this had an impact on schooling so close to the end of term.
- Cllr Tagger stated that there had been a proposal to adjust the school day to make better use of school times and the parents would be consulted in this respect.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that both the school and the pupils had been exemplary, despite it having been such a challenging year and there had been a preliminary inspection by relevant authorities and although there were a few minor issues that needed to be resolved overall, the feedback was extremely good.

Police

- Nothing to report, however Cllr Stones undertook to obtain crime figures for the last 12 months, for the area from the police website and distribute same to the Council.

VS

Gardening Club

- Cllr Tagger advised that Issue 16 would hopefully be the last one and that they had also prepared a PDF newsletter to be put on the website by Cllr Smith.
- Cllr Smith suggested that Cllr Tagger continue with the publications and commended him on the quality and engaging content in these.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that he had been in contact with Craig Gallimore from the Kyte Restaurant, and they were in discussions regarding how they could ensure that the gardening club meetings – the first of which was scheduled – would be COVID compliant.

FS

Village Field

- Cllr Stainer confirmed that there had been no committee meetings, however the picnic table had been delivered and stored in the container whilst awaiting installation.

Newsletter

- It was agreed that the next newsletter would be published during September

9. Minor Items

Temporary closure of Marlpit Lane

- Mr Hames advised that Marlpit Lane would be shut on the 2nd of August, from 09h30 to 15h30 for resurfacing of the road.
- Cllr Smith undertook to notify the farmer affected.
- Mr Hames further noted that on the 1st of August, Eggborough cooling towers would be demolished.

FS

Appointment of Mrs Jones as the Parish Council clerk

- It was agreed that the appointment of Mrs Jones as the clerk would be tabled for discussion at the next meeting.
- Cllr Thompson requested that the discussion include activities that the Council should be performing but may not be performing at present.
- Cllr Thompson noted that the standing orders as minuted earlier in the year were different to those reflected on the website.
- Cllr Thompson undertook to provide Cllr Smith with the correct standing orders and Cllr Smith undertook to update the website accordingly.
- Discussion was held regarding the legality of appointing a paid clerk and whether the clerk should be paid as an employee or a contracted service provider.
- It was agreed that the matter would be added as an additional agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.
- Cllr Britton proposed, and Cllr Smith seconded, that the services of Mrs Jones be retained to prepare the agenda and minutes for monthly meetings, there was no dissent.

LT/
FS

- Cllr Tagger proposed that to avoid having to employ a clerk, but to still meet the governance requirements, Cllr Smith be appointed as the Proper Officer and Mrs Jones be contracted to perform only the administrative task of preparing the agenda and minutes for each meeting.
- This proposal was seconded by Cllr Stones and there was no dissent.

Request to residents to cut hedges

- Cllr Smith confirmed that she had requested residents on Beech Crescent to cut their hedges and Cllr Britton confirmed that this appeared to have been done.

Recognition of Darrington on “The Archers”

- Cllr Tagger highlighted that he was aware that Darrington, albeit not the Council’s village, was regularly mentioned on BBC’s “The Archers” and suggested that as a Parish Council, there was possible opportunity to leverage that for the village.
- Whilst no further action was agreed to in this respect, the meeting agreed that it was good publicity for the village.

10. Date of Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled to be held on the 9th of September 2021, ideally at the Reading Rooms, but if this is not possible, to be held at The Spread.