

Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17th of June 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

9 Residents

Action

1. Apologies & Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Jones WMDC tendered his apologies, and no declarations of interest were noted.

2. Public Forum

- Cllr Britton took the meeting through the requisite COVID regulations and protocols, confirmed that the meeting adhered to government's stipulated COVID guidelines and highlighted that the Council was once again legally required to hold face-to-face monthly meetings.
- Cllr Britton mentioned that an email had been received from Karen Mann at the Yorkshire Local Councils Association (YCLA), querying the legitimacy of the meeting.
- Cllr Britton highlighted that the assumption made by Karen Mann, that the Council does not have an appointed Officer, was incorrect and recalled that Cllr Smith had in fact, been appointed as the Officer some time back.
- Cllr Stainer supported Cllr Britton's statement and it was agreed that the meeting was in fact legitimate and would continue on this basis.
- No objections were raised in this respect and Cllr Britton proceeded to open the meeting.
- Cllr Britton welcomed members of the public to the meeting and requested that they keep their face masks on until it was their turn to speak, advising that they would each have a turn to speak.
- Cllr Britton offered them the opportunity to discuss their planning application concerns under the Public Forum portion of the meeting, as opposed to waiting until the latter part of the meeting during which Planning Matters are ordinarily discussed.
- Cllr Britton further indicated that the Council would discuss and make their determination regarding the matter at that point in the meeting and the decision would be placed on the website by Cllr Smith the following day.
- No objections were raised in respect of Cllr Britton's suggestion and the first resident was invited to place their complaint on record.
- Resident A introduced himself, citing that he and his wife had been living in Darrington for 6 years and they had recently been made aware by the local council's building control department, that there was a planning application on the plot adjacent to their property which at present, was a gravel car park.
- Resident A advised that he had lodged an objection himself and he requested support from the Parish Council of his objection, highlighting that the building application had been lodged and rejected a number of times previously.

- Cllr Britton advised those present that the Parish Council had 3 options in this respect: a) to not comment at all on the objection, b) to comment, or c) to lodge an objection itself, and requested clarification as to which of these Resident A was requesting.
- Resident A confirmed that he was requesting that the Parish Council lodge its own objection with the building control department as well.
- Resident B expressed his support of Resident A's objection and expressed his dissatisfaction that they were once again having to go through the objection process, considering the number of times that the building application had already been rejected by the building control department.
- Cllr Britton highlighted that building regulations had recently been relaxed by government and that this was likely the reason that the application had once again been submitted by the land owner.
- Resident C supported Resident A and B's statements and raised concerns regarding the aesthetic and ecological impact on Darrington Hall, its surroundings and the village and requested that the Parish Council both support their objections as well as lodge their own objection with the local authority.
- Resident D highlighted that the proposed structure would restrict accessibility for emergency services such as fire trucks and ambulances.
- Resident B further advised that should the building application be approved, there would be an increase in the number of cars parking on Estcourt Road and this would increase the risk of danger to residents, highlighting further that the wall to be constructed as part of the application was, in fact, on his land and not the applicant's.
- Cllr Tagger reminded the residents that an objection could only be lodged on the basis of legitimate, and not emotional reasons and urged them to ensure that their objection met this criteria in order for it to be considered by the local authority.
- Cllr Britton further clarified that the basis on which residents could object differed to those on which the Parish Council could object, however given their mandate, they were in a position to object should that be the decision made by Parish Council.
- Cllr Jackson queried whether the residents were made aware, prior to the purchasing of their respective properties, that the land in question was earmarked for development.
- The residents unanimously agreed that they had not been made aware, however they had been made aware of the previous building application rejections.
- Resident A took the meeting through a brief history of the land's planning history and confirmed that his objection had been prepared with objectivity in mind.
- Cllr Thompson suggested to the residents that they consider forming a resident group in order to be able to present at the planning committee meeting, as well as petition against the development.
- Cllr Britton thanked the residents for their attendance and upon their exit from the meeting, invited the next group of residents into the meeting.
- Cllr Britton took the next group of residents through the same introduction as the first group and invited the first of the residents to present their case.
- Residents E and F advised that they no longer live in the village, however they were in attendance for 3 reasons: a) Their daughter lives in close proximity to the land in question, b) When they previously lived in the village they had a similar issue with their own property where the property adjacent to them was developed and directly impacted on them, and c) Resident E was a council member of another parish within the area and he had a vested interest in understanding how the matter would be dealt with by the Parish Council.
- Resident G presented his case, highlighting that he had requested a copy of the property deed for the land in question and that the current deeds had restrictive covenants, which supersede any planning application and should be taken into account by the local authority when reviewing such application.

- Resident G advised according to the deed, the land to be developed on, was in fact initially earmarked as parking for Darrington Hall.
- He further highlighted that the building plans under review indicated parking space for 2 vehicles, however in order for this to be fulfilled, a portion of the retaining wall would have to be knocked down and covered with concrete.
- Resident G brought the attendees’ attention to the restrictive covenant in the title deed, which stipulated that no part of the retaining wall should be removed or used for any purpose other than lawns and gardens and therefore, the building plans are in contravention of the restrictive covenant and should be rejected for legal reasons.
- Resident G confirmed that these title deeds were the most recent iteration on record for Darrington Hall.
- Resident H closed the discussion by reminding the Parish Council that the new development would not only infringe on the privacy of the surrounding properties, but also block the road due to the lack of capacity for vehicles.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Cllr Tagger queried not having received the minutes for the previous meetings and undertook to advise Cllr Smith should he not receive the minutes for the meeting within 7 days after the meeting date. AT
- Minutes for the Annual General Meeting held on 20th May 2021 were proposed by Cllr Stones, and seconded by Cllr Stainer, as a true and accurate record of the meeting. There was no dissent.
- Furthermore, minutes for the meeting held on 20th of May 2021 were proposed by Cllr Stones, and seconded by Cllr Stainer as a true and accurate record of the meeting. There was once again no dissent.

4. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

i. Website Content

- Cllr Britton noted that the annual signed financial documents had been placed on the website by 1st July 2021. No further action is required.

ii. Village Benches

- Cllr Jackson advised that he had sourced a provider to install the benches, however he was unable to obtain prices until such time as he could obtain foundation drawings and clarity regarding the expected arrival dates of the benches.
- Cllr Smith confirmed that once the benches arrived (anticipated to be during August), they would be stored in her garage until such time as they were installed.
- Cllr Smith further confirmed that the fitting kits for the benches had already been ordered, as the requirements were the same for each bench.
- Cllr Smith undertook to notify Cllr Jackson once she had an expected date of arrival for the benches, and Cllr Jackson undertook to liaise with the provider regarding the installation. FS/JJ

iii. Milners Land and Footpaths

- Cllr Britton reminded the meeting that he had undertaken to visit the library to investigate the legality of the access on Milners Lane and other footpaths in Darrington, once the library was again open to the public.
- Cllr Britton advised that he had visited the library and was advised that the records are in fact, held at County Records Office which has not yet re-opened.
- Cllr Britton to visit the County Records Office once it has re-opened.

MB

iv. Dog Waste Stations

- Cllr Smith confirmed that the additional 2 dog bins and the movable bin for the orchard had been ordered, as well as new poo bags for the existing and the new bins.
- Cllr Britton advised that he had visited the bins numerous times and that there was no smell emanating from any of the bins at any time.
- No further action is required.

v. Speed Surveys

- Cllr Smith reminded the meeting that she had undertaken to follow up on the data obtained from the speed strips and advised that she had not yet had the opportunity to do so.
- Cllr Smith undertook to follow up on this item.

FS

vi. Bankswood

- Cllr Tagger confirmed that Yvette Cooper's office was now involved in this matter and that he had received a phone call from a person in their office, who had checked with the House of Commons Library regarding where they stand with regards to contesting the decision by Wakefield Council.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that the matter could not go further until this clarity had been obtained and also reminded the meeting that the Ombudsman had turned down the objection due to the individual nature of the complaint.
- Cllr Tagger advised that the House of Commons Library team had confirmed that the Ombudsman is technically correct in that his office could not progress the complaint due to the complainant (Cllr Tagger) living too far away from the location of the complaint.
- Cllr Tagger did however mention that the fact that the Council had already admitted that there was a problem, and that it had already made 3 enforcement orders in respect of the illegal occupation. He has persuaded Yvette Cooper's office to request that she makes representation to the Wakefield Council on the Parish Council's behalf.

vii. School Shed Request

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

viii. Darrington Playgroup

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

JJo

ix. Spread Complaint

- Cllr Smith confirmed that she had responded to the complainant.
- No further action is required, and this matter can be removed from the agenda.

x. Kyte Steps

- Cllr Tagger reminded the meeting that this agenda item was brought about when he had visited the Kyte restaurant to discuss the possibility of the gardening club once again being located at the premises, with the new owner.
- Cllr Tagger advised that during the conversation, he commented to the owner that the stairs to the restaurant appeared to be problematic and the owner suggested that if the Parish Council was willing to manage the project, he would be willing to finance the placement of a ramp, as he was keen to get more involved in the village.
- It was agreed that Cllr Jackson and Cllr Stainer would visit the site in question to determine whether the construction of a ramp is possible, and to feedback at the next meeting.

JJ/PS

xi. Old Orchard Plants

- Cllr Britton confirmed that the plants had been bought and planted and were being regularly watered.
- Cllr Jackson to water the plants the following week.
- Cllr Stainer to cut the grass in the orchard the following week.

JJ
PS

xii. Reusing of Planted Primulas

- Cllrs Smith and Britton advised that this had not gone according to plan, as most of the primulas had been taken, and should be re-thought the following year.
- It was agreed that in future years there should be no approval required, as this delayed the process.
- Cllr Thompson queried whether the tree towards the traffic lights should be cut back, as it was covering the left-hand traffic light and Cllr Britton advised that he had liaised with the Council, who in turn instructed the Parish Council to not have the tree cut back, as it was the responsibility of the Highways Department to ensure that this is done and, if the Parish Council did in fact arrange for it to be cut back, it could be subject to prosecution.
- It was agreed that if Nick Dyas (the gardener) undertook the strimming of any trees in Darrington, it would be his responsibility and the Parish Council would not be held accountable for any damage, injuries, etc. despite its paying for such service.
- Cllr Thompson to communicate this to Mick.

LT

5. Village Furniture & Sign Proposals

- Cllr Smith confirmed that the picnic bench had arrived and would be installed on the field, and that the arrival of the other benches were being awaited.
- No further action is required in this respect.

6. Correspondence

- Cllr Britton advised that he had received correspondence from the owner of the local Post Office, requesting that the Parish Council advertise the service on his behalf. It was agreed that this would be done. **VS**
- Cllr Smith advised of correspondence received from residents in respect of the wooden bus shelter near the traffic lights, noting that the shelter appeared to have been moved and querying whether it should be taken down. Cllr Smith confirmed that she had replied to the resident, and it was agreed that that Cllr Jackson would go down and have a look at the shelter with a view to determining whether or not it should be taken down and destroyed. **JJ**
- Cllr Smith noted that Tony Hames, a recently appointed district councillor for Ward 13 had sent an email to the Parish Council, advising that he would be attending Parish Council meetings where he could and offering his services and skills where he could. Cllr Smith further noted that Mr. Hames was requesting input from the Council members on a query that he been approached on, namely the removal of the foot bridge over the A1 at Westpark, to facilitate proposals for major alterations to the filling station on the Southbound carriageway. Cllr Britton advised that he had responded accordingly, advising that there was no representation from Westpark on the Parish Council, and it was therefore not up to the Parish Council to determine whether the foot bridge was of any use. Cllr Smith to respond to him advising that the Parish Council has no comment in this respect and JJo to include Mr. Hames in the Parish Council's mailing list. **FS JJo**

7. Finance

- Cllr Britton queried whether payment had been made for use of the Spread's conference room the previous month, to which Cllr Stainer replied that no invoice had been received.
- Cllr Britton to follow up with Andrew Johnson (the Landlord) on the previous and current month's invoice. **MB**
- The RFO (Cllr Stainer) confirmed that the amount brought forward from April was £47,134.06 and that there was one item of income in May – the VAT refund of £691.88.

There were 10 items of expenditure:

Date Approved	Item	Payment Method	Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT
20.5.21	05-2122	Cheque 851	D Dyas	Gardening/maintenance	176.00	-
20.5.21	06-2122	Cheque 852	Came and Company	Local Council Insurance Policy	584.06	-
20.5.21	07-2122	Cheque 853	Streetmaster	Bench furniture for village	9,513.60	1,585.60
20.5.21	08-2122	Cheque 854	Woodberry	Picnic table	366.00	61.00
20.5.21	09-2122	Cheque 855	Mick Flaherty	Electricity for Christmas lights	25.00	-
20.5.21	10-2122	Cheque 856	Mick Britton	Salt bin	119.95	19.99
20.5.21	11-2122	Cheque 857	Carter and Jackson	Printing of newsletters	275.00	-
20.5.21	12-2122	Cheque 858	Mick Britton	Materials for Notice Board restoration	44.66	7.45
20.5.21	13-2122	Cheque 859	Mick Britton	Masks and gel for PC meeting	3.00	0.50
20.5.21	14-2122	Cheque 860	Darrington CE Primary School	S137 grant - school reflective garden	1,000.00	-
Total expenditure					12,107.27	1,674.54

- Cllr Stainer advised that this left a balance of £35,718.67.

Payments to be approved for June:

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	4,340.69	603.11

- Cllr Smith proposed these payments be made and Cllr Stones seconded, with no dissent.
- Taking into consideration anticipated expenditure, the RFO forecast a balance for the end of the financial year of £23,560.93.
- Cllr Britton noted that this was almost double the Parish Council’s precept and highlighted that there would be additional income of approximately £11 000 in the not-too-distant future, due to the construction of Number 3 nearing completion and sale.
- Discussion was held regarding whether to construct a new bus shelter at the cost of the Parish Council, given that it was the responsibility of the Coach Company to do so.
- It was agreed that as the Parish Council was in a financially strong position, further discussion would be held once the additional levies had been received, with a view to considering the construction of a possibly-wheelchair-friendly bus shelter and ramp.
- Cllr Stainer queried with Cllr Stones whether there had been any feedback received from residents in respect of the newsletter’s invitation for suggestions as to how to spend the Parish Council’s surplus funds.
- Cllr Stones advised that no suggestions had been received in this respect.
- Cllr Stainer queried whether any communication had been sent in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy and how it had been spent, and Cllr Stones undertook to determine to whom this communication should be addressed. VS
- Cllr Stainer undertook to send the required annual ICL expenditure report to the relevant person upon receipt of the details from Cllr Stones. PS
- Cllr Tagger reminded the meeting of a previous discussion regarding appointing an internal auditor and advised that he had approached someone for the role.
- Cllr Tagger highlighted that whilst the individual had expressed interest in taking on the role, he wanted to discuss same prior to making any commitment.
- It was agreed that the appointment of an internal auditor would be postponed until a bit later in the year, however Cllr Stainer agreed to engage in initial discussions with him in the interim. AT/PS

8. Planning Matters

- Cllr Britton noted the request for removal of a sycamore tree near Police House on Estcourt Road due to ground rot, and it was agreed that this would be left in the capable hands of the Tree Planning Officer at the WMDC.
- Cllr Britton advised that the application for a single-story extension to Squirrel House, 9 Owl Close had been approved.

- Cllr Britton invited comments from the meeting regarding the application for construction of a 4-bedroom dwelling on the property adjacent to Darrington Hall, as well as the objections raised by residents during the public forum portion of the meeting.
- Cllr Britton proposed that the Parish Council consider lodging an objection on the basis that the development a) will restrict access of emergency vehicles, b) will impact on traffic congestion in the area, c) contravenes the Parish plan in terms of the stone wall being partially removed as well as constitutes infill, and d) is not consistent with the aesthetic of the village.
- After some discussion it was unanimously agreed, Cllr Tagger proposed and Cllr Jackson seconded, that the Parish Council object to the application. There was no dissent in this respect.
- Cllr Tagger undertook to lodge the objection on the Parish Council's behalf on basis of a) the aesthetic of the proposed development (including the knocking down of the stone wall), b) the restrictive covenant on Darrington Hall's title deed, and c) the road disruption that will occur as a result of the development.
- Cllr Stones advised that she had been engaging with one of the residents in respect of the intention to build warehousing and a distribution centre behind and in front of Grove Hall.
- Cllr Stones highlighted that the resident had mentioned that he had not been given an opportunity to object to the development as Wakefield Council had already pushed the application through and, he was expected to make representation at the meeting, however he had not turned up.
- Cllr Britton advised that an application for warehousing does not have to adhere to the same stringent requirements as that of an application for housing.
- Cllr Stones committing to contacting the resident and attempting to obtain more information, however Cllr Britton advised that unless the resident makes representation to the Parish Council of his concerns, no further discussion should be held in this respect.

AT

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

School

Nothing to report.

Police

Nothing to report.

Gardening Club

- Cllr Tagger advised that they were now up to Issue No. 15 and everything was on track for the first face-to-face meeting to be held at the Kyte.

Village Field

- Nothing to report, however discussions were held regarding the possibility of having another bonfire.

Newsletter

- Cllr Stones confirmed the newsletter had been sent out and Cllr Smith advised that there had been quite a few responses from the letter.

10. Carried Over Items

To be deleted as an agenda item.

JJo

11. Minor Items

YLCA

- Cllr Thompson advised that she had been in contact with Caryn from the YLCA and that she had been advised about the “Get-it-right” scheme, which is a pilot programme for Parish Councils in which the YLCA assists and supports them for 6 months.
- Cllr Thompson highlighted that as it was a pilot programme there would initially be no cost for the Parish Council.
- Discussion was held regarding the appointment of Cllr Smith as the Parish Council Officer, and it was agreed that Cllr Smith had in fact been formally appointed during a previous meeting.
- Cllr Smith to investigate whether there was any merit in the programme being undertaken and if so, to place it as an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

FS

A1 Footpath (from Escourt Lane to Spittlegap)

- Cllr Smith noted that the footpath along the A1 was once again overgrown, however Cllr Britton confirmed that it was the responsibility of the Highways Department to ensure that it is cut.

12. Date of Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 15th June at 7pm and will most likely be held once again in the Spread Eagle pub conference room.
- The meeting ended at 20h50.