

Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Virtual Meeting

January 2021 7pm

Present: Cllrs Britton (Chair), Smith, Stainer, Stones, Thompson, Tagger and Jackson (who joined mid call)

In Attendance: None

1. Apologies & Declarations of Interest

None and none offered

2. Public Forum

No-one in attendance

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Dec 20 minutes proposed as a true and accurate record of the meeting by Cllr Thompson and seconded by Cllr Stones. There was no dissent.

4. Matters Arising

- a. **Dog Waste Station Installation** – Cllr Smith confirmed that installation instructions had been sent to Cllr Stainer. Installation is reliant on lifting of lockdown and improvement in weather, and so will move to Carried Over Items
- b. **Christmas Tree Item** – Cllr Britton has taken the tree down himself, and in doing so found that one end of the lights which is an open socket was missing its cap which would explain why the lights kept tripping.
- c. **Website Update** – Cllr Smith confirms she set the website live and having noticed that Wix adverts remained even though the 3rd party ads had been removed following the previous upgrade, she took advantage of a 50% discount to upgrade to the next level at a cost of only £20.84. There was no dissent to the payment being added to payments for this month, so Cllr Smith agreed to forward the invoice to Cllr Stainer.

24 villagers have already subscribed to the newsletters and Cllr Smith will do regular pushes for more.

Still awaiting info for pages regarding the A1 and the Tythe Barn.

Cllr Smith had bumped into the resident farmer who owns the Pig Farm and asked if he'd like to send her content for a page re the pig smells in the village explaining what causes it, steps he's taken to minimise it etc and he agreed to do so thinking it a good idea.

She had included the Gardening Club Newsletter but hadn't found any in the info

she got from Kelvin, so AT will see what he can find and send on, and then once the meetings recommence Cllr Thompson will send on as they're done.

ACTION AT.

- d. **Newsletter** – It was agreed that given the current lockdown situation it might be nice to put out a letter towards the end March/early April and use the content not only to update but to generate more subscribers for the newsletters.

Cllr Stainer double checked that we hadn't charged for advertising in Dec, and asked Cllr Stones for the printing invoice which she will chase.

Cllr Thompson notified Cllrs that the man who had agreed to provide the skip for the clearing of the Tythe Barn area, had offered the skip to us Free Of Charge if we include a mention/advert for him in the next Newsletter. All agreed that would represent a great saving and for Cllr Thompson to take him up on his offer. Cllr Smith brought up that there was a 'local businesses' page on the old website. She intends to recreate a new one, but doing so will require a review of the businesses to ensure they're still trading etc. Cllr Thompson will aim to get a pre-prepared advert sent to Cllr Stones.

ACTION LT/VS

- e. **Wentworth Park Rise Tree Ownership** – Cllr Smith had gone through Land Registry but the houses have not yet been registered and so it can't be determined who is responsible for the tree. There was an option via an agent to pay to do a similar search at a cost of £29 but it was unclear whether that would be successful if the land hasn't been registered. Cllr Britton suggested we save time and money by simply writing to the owners, or knocking on their door and asking if they own the tree. If not, we'll adopt it for the Parish. Cllr Smith agrees to get in touch with them.

ACTION FS

- f. **Standing Orders & Regulations** – Cllr Smith agrees to look at the old website and through the previous Clerk's documents to look for these and if they aren't to be found, will contact WMDC for a set, which she will then circulate to all councillors and add as an agenda item for February.

ACTION FS

- g. **New Clerk** – Cllr Stones said she would speak to Cllrs Britton and Smith following the meeting re her decision whether to help with Clerk duties.

- h. **Wentworth Park Rise Hedge Height Enforcement** – Cllr Tagger will attempt to contact the Electrician with an offer for him to pass onto the owner of us trimming the tree for him. Cllr Britton suggests the item be moved to Carried Over Items so we can be updated but it doesn't need to be discussed in February.

ACTION AT/FS

- i. **A1 Pollution** – Cllr Tagger hadn't managed to contact WMDC but will endeavour to do so before the next meeting.

ACTION AT

- j. **Bankswood Stables** – Cllr Tagger contacted the Ombudsman again and was told that the complaint has now been progressed to step two and that he will hear in 4 to 6 weeks.

5. Correspondence

- a. **Salt Bins** – Cllr Britton has re-stocked some salt bins in the village and had had a letter from residents of North Lodge Lane asking whether we could supply a new salt bin as theirs is an unadopted road. Cllr Smith contacted the Council to ask if they would supply new bins either at a cost for unadopted roads, or for adopted roads, and if they would refill any that we purchased. Budgets seem to have been cut and they stated that no new bins or refills could be requested. Existing bins would only be refilled during normal winter replenishment activities. Cllr Britton suggested we purchase a bin for North Lodge Lane and check it before winter to see if it needed refilling. Cllr Tagger reiterated his concern that supplying a bin would make us in some way legally liable should any accidents occur. Cllrs Britton and Smith were happy that the supplying of a bin would not affect the fact that the road owners would retain responsibility, but conceded that Cllr Tagger could investigate further. Cllr Britton suggested that the legal advice helpline shown in the Parish Council magazine might prove useful. Cllr Smith will have a look as she hadn't seen them this far. Cllr Stones suggested that the owners on North Lodge Lane apply for a section 137 grant for the salt bin which should ensure no responsibility is transferred to us. Cllr Stones will contact the residents about this approach. Cllr Smith asked for thoughts about whether to advertise the information we've found out to villagers and suggest they contact us if they are without a bin. All agreed and Cllr Jackson suggested putting the same information on the village noticeboards too.

ACTION FS/VS/AT

- b. **PWLB Notice of Repayment** – Cllr Stainer said not received though Cllr Smith thought she'd forwarded to him. Cllr Smith to re-forward.

ACTION FS

- c. **Village Field Footpath** – Cllr Smith will direct the resident who wrote asking for an update on the idea of a path across the village field, to the Field Committee.

ACTION FS

- d. **Precept Demand Documents** – Cllr Smith forwarded the documents onto Cllr Stainer who confirmed that he did them every year so they didn't need to be included in Correspondence. Cllr Smith read another letter from WMDC explaining that whilst some money had been made available to councils for compensation for reduced tax base due to Covid, our tax base hadn't been affected and therefore no compensation would be given.

- e. **Land Enquiry** – Cllr Smith read out a letter received from a Pontefract resident interested in buying land in Darrington on which to build his family home, asking if

we might be able to give him any advice rather than him trying to contact landowners via land registry, though it was unclear what exactly he needed. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Smith would reply explaining that we don't own any land in Darrington and wouldn't be able to comment until plans had actually been submitted.

ACTION FS

6. Finance

- a. **21/22 Budget** – Cllrs agreed at the last meeting not to apply for an increase in precept, and so the agreed amounts finalised at the last meeting will be taken by Cllr Stainer to Cllr Britton for signing.
- b. The RFO (Cllr Stainer) confirmed that the amount brought forward from the end November was £37,756.80, and that there was no income in December.

There were 5 items of expenditure:

#####	22-2021	Cheque 829	Simon Smith	S137 grant - repair of Village Field k	83.00	0.00
#####	23-2021	Cheque 830	A Tagger	Printer ink	43.99	7.33
#####	24-2021	Cheque 831	John Hoyle	S137 grant - new bench for Village	601.97	0.00
#####	25-2021	Cheque 832	D Dyas	Gardening/maintenance	48.00	0.00
#####	26-2021	Cheque 833	M Britton	Equipment for Christmas tree lights	101.90	16.99
Total expenditure					878.86	24.32

This left a balance of £36,877.94

Payments to be approved for January:

#####	27-2021	Cheque 834	Fiona Smith	Premium Plan for web site	43.20	7.20
#####	28-2021	Cheque 835	D Dyas	Gardening/maintenance	144.00	0.00
#####	29-2021	Cheque 836	M Britton	Rock salt	29.94	5.99
TOTAL					217.14	13.19

To which would be added £20.84 as discussed earlier to Cllr Smith for the website upgrade.

Cllr Stones proposed and Cllr Jackson seconded the payments and there was no dissent.

The RFO forecast a balance for the end of the financial year to be £34,511.23.

Cllr Smith queried the status of the Village Sign project. Ian Thompson had passed onto Cllr Stones but advised her to do nothing until late Jan or February as men would need to come out and look at the site. Cllr Smith stated she would put the project back on the agenda for February.

ACTION FS

7. Planning Matters

- a. Cllr Britton received a call from a village resident notifying us of his intention to submit a planning application to build a house at the rear of his daughter's house, and inviting comment from us if needed. All agreed the existing house had such a large amount of land at the rear, that even though it technically would be classed as infill, the impact would be minimal and in line with another property. WMDC is more positive regarding infill applications as long as the impact is small. It was agreed that we would await the actual submission and make comments then. Cllr Britton confirmed no other planning applications had been received.

8. Reports: School/Police/Gardening Club/Village Field/Newsletter

- a. **School** – Cllr Tagger stressed the difficulties the teachers were having in continuing to provide online learning, but that they were doing a sterling job. Cllr Jackson asked if any child didn't have the eqpt needed that we could support, but Cllr Tagger thought not as the school had been commended on the provision of eqpt.
- b. **Police** – No report
- c. **Gardening Club** – Cllr Tagger thought the newsletter looked great on the new website. He had had a couple of people ask to subscribe to the newsletters so Cllr Smith asked if he could forward her their information (email and 1st line of address) so she could update the distribution lists. **ACTION AT**
- d. **Village Field** – no report
- e. **Newsletter** – already discussed

9. 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.

Cllr Britton asked that Defibrillator window repairs, hedge cutting on Phillip's Lane and Planter Damage be added.

The current items are:

- a. Parish Meeting and Annual General meeting
- b. Litter pick
- c. Speed strips installation and data analysis

- d. 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.
- e. Enforcement of regulations within deeds of property by Wakefield MDC planning.
- f. Broken glass in telephone box housing defibrillator
- g. Hedge Cutting on Philip's Lane
- h. Planter Damage
- i. Dog Waste Station Installations
- j. Wentworth Park Rise Tree Height Enforcement

10. Minor Items

- a. Cllr Smith had had a suggestion from a village resident for picnic benches on the grass verges in the village where walkers/cyclists etc could stop for a chat/drink. Cllr Tagger liked the idea and had seen some with a metal figures integrated. The idea seemed popular and Cllr Britton said he was sure that companies advertised on the Parish Council Magazine so Cllr Smith agreed to search Google and the magazines (NALC Mags) and see what she could find out for next month.

ACTION FS

- b. Cllr Smith explained that the previous Clerk had been contacted by a village resident who lived on Valley Rd, asking about (and offering to help with) maintenance of the new bedded area on a corner of Valley Rd, where a dead tree had been removed. The area used to be paved right up to the tree trunk, but now the tree has been removed, they appear to have removed much of the paving to create a bedded area. The resident had said that some compost/bedding was needed and asked whether our contractors might add it to their list. Cllr Smith agreed to contact First Impressions to see what they suggested. Cllr Thompson pointed out that the flowers that had been stolen from the beds on Marlpit Lane hadn't been replaced – Cllr Stones explained this was due to the poor weather but that she would contact them again.

ACTION VS

- c. Cllr Tagger asked if we ought to be doing anything to check there were no villagers in need of food or support that we could be helping. Cllrs were aware of three charities covering the area, so Cllr Smith offered to put a post on our Facebook page to encourage people to let us know of anyone who may need help and we could point people in the right direction.

ACTION FS

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tues 18th Feb at 7pm.

Meeting ended at 8.33pm