

Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting Reading Room

Thursday 12th March 2020 7PM

Present:

Cllr Britton (Chair), Cllr Smith (Vice Chair), Cllr Tagger, Cllr Thompson, Cllr Stones, Cllr. Stainer, Cllr Jackson, Cllr D. Jones (Wakefield MDC)
Clerk – Ian Thompson.

Apologies:

None required.

In Attendance:

Four members of the public were present.

2020-03-01 Declaration Of Interests:

None offered.

2020-03-02 Public Matters:

- i) A resident reported that Denise Crowther who has run the Darrington post-office two days a week for many years is retiring at the end of March. This will leave the village without a post-office. It is understood that the vicar requested that the vicar having has written to the “outreach” representative. Monday’s “coffee morning” session is widely used by residents to also collect their pensions, as both take place in the “Reading Rooms”. It is understood that the current post office owner has been approached but turned down the opportunity to extend the facility. Cllr Tagger is aware of a gentleman who has other local businesses may be interested and will approach him. In the event that no interest is shown Cllr Tagger will contact the clerk who will contact “Outreach”. Cllr Tagger is aware that a collection is being made towards a leaving present and suggested the parish council make a contribution. The councillors agreed a gift of £50 using Section 137 legislation to recognise Denise’s 15 years valuable contribution to the village and asked the clerk to write to her thanking her for her service and including the cheque.

ACTION AT/IT

- ii) Residents raised the subject of litter in the village. The clerk reported that he is already in touch with Wakefield’s Street Scene and they will be sending details about their “Litter Hero’s” scheme. Once the details are known a “pick” can be arranged.
- iii) Given the new governments recent infrastructure investment related initiatives a resident said he had received a leaflet stating that an upgrade of the existing A1 was planned for 2015. The source of this leaflet is not known. The clerk said that he was aware that Highways England have always had this upgrade near the top

of their priority list and indeed he believes that a team has been in place planning alternatives. However, nothing has been published.

2020-03-03 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting:

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

Matters Arising:

- i) The clerk has sent thanks to his contact at Street Scene for clearing the litter on the curve of the slip road entering the northbound A1. She replied stating that they would try to fit it into a regular schedule. However, as the clerk pointed out the responsibility actually lies with Highways England.
- ii) Car parking on the pavement at the bottom of Orchard Lane improved for a while but has started again. The chairman stated that he has heard that there is a move afoot to ban parking on pavements throughout the country. No further action is currently planned by the council.
- iii) The clerk has written to the “Clerks and Council’s Direct” magazine for their advice on who is responsible for enforcing covenants within land title deeds. Unfortunately, their legal correspondent has died and so they will publish the request, anonymously, in the magazine for other clerks to comment. The clerk had also sent the deeds to Cllr Jones for the attention of Wakefield’s legal department and he reported that he has passed it on to them.
- iv) With regard to removing ivy from trees in the Old Orchard the bad weather has delayed any action. Cllrs Stainer and Britton will perform the action as and when the weather improves.
ACTION MB/PS
- v) The clerk confirmed that he has written to the PCC asking for permission to enhance the gravel surface of the tithe barn car park.
- vi) The clerk has written to Leeds District Council asking for the traffic monitoring strips to be laid in the village – one set in Estcourt Road and one in Valley Road. He confirmed the cost would be £300 plus VAT. He has asked that the strips be put in place outside of the Easter school holidays. His contact at Leeds is unfortunately absent through sickness and is expected to will follow it up on his return. The council unanimously confirmed that the cost was acceptable and gave the clerk formal permission to proceed with an order.
- vii) The clerk has written to the clerk at South Kirby regarding the offer for Darrington to join with them for VE celebrations. As discussed at the last meeting the clerk was instructed to decline the offer as Pontefract have already asked Cllr Tagger to present on the Darrington Air Crash at their event. The chairman informed the meeting that there is a move afoot to have an event on the 8th of May at the “Spread Eagle” with fancy dress and this will be advertised in due course.

- viii) An investigation into whether or not there is a maximum sum that a Parish Council can hold in terms of multiples of the precept has resulted in a conclusion that there is no maximum. The chairman stressed that the council is actively seeking residents' views on projects and are anxious to fund projects that reflect the residents' suggestions.
- ix) Regarding the planning application for Church Farm Cllr Stones reported that she obtained the plans and confirmed the application is for an agricultural storage building. The chairman advised the meeting that the application has been approved.
- x) The clerk had been instructed to review the planning application for an extension at 1 Applewood Gardens and has visited the Wakefield planning site on more than one occasion in order to retrieve a plan to send to councillors. The latest visit has changed the status of the application to "approved", but at no time was a plan visible on the site. Cllr Jones from Wakefield MDC stated that the planning committee would themselves have site of a plan. The chairman expressed dissatisfaction that the council is expected to pass comment on applications without being given enough information to do so.
- xi) Cllr Smith had been asked to publicise the work taking place by Wakefield MDC on the future of Pontefract. Unfortunately, as the parish council meeting in February was only one day short of the final comments date there was no point in her doing so!

2020-03-04 Correspondence:

- i) An email from Mrs Carol Glover stating that "smells from the pig farm were particularly pungent on Thursday 5th March" and asked that the parish council make a complaint to the appropriate authority. The chairman confirmed that this was the only one complaint on this matter. Cllr Tagger stated that a thorough investigation in 2016 concluded that the farmer in fact had received the highest grading possible from the environment authorities. Since then he has always actively co-operated and personally investigated any complaints. From previous discussions councillors understand that he plans "smell generating processes" to minimise impact on the village but that a change in wind direction can cause smells. The chairman pointed out that Darrington is a rural village adjacent to a pig farm and it is inevitable that such smells will occur from time to time. The councillors concluded that they would not take any further action. Mrs Glover's email also offered to help with any litter picks in future and she was thanked for this offer.
- ii) An email from a company known as "jobcentrearnme" requesting that a link to their website "jobcetrenearme.com" be placed on the parish council's website to assists residents find their nearest job centre. The councillors concluded that they couldn't imagine anyone wanting to find the nearest job centre would look to the parish council's website rather than go to the job centre's own site. They concluded that they would not be adding such a link.

- iii) An email from Community Heartbeat asking whoever checks the defibrillator to wear gloves and spray with antiseptic when the check is made. As it happens to be the clerk who checks the defibrillator, he confirmed he would do this. It was also noted that a glass panel in the phone box housing the defibrillator has shattered. The chairman confirmed it is the council's responsibility to replace the glass and that this issue is not affecting the defibrillator itself in any way.

2020-03-05 Finance:

The RFO (Cllr Stainer) reported that the amount brought forward from the end of January was £21,080.85.

There was no income in February.

There were five 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>
13/2/2020	27-1920	Cheque 800	P M Stainer	Postage Stamps	£8.40	£ 0
13/2/2020	28-1920	Cheque 801	I Thompson	VAT for training course	£19.80	£ 0
13/2/2020	29-1920	Cheque 802	I Thompson	Fee for land registry	£7.00	£ 0
13/2/2020	30-1920	Cheque 803	The Community Heartbeat Trust	Defibrillator Maintenance Agreement	£162.00	£27.00
13/2/2020	31-1920	Cheque 804	V. Stones	Christmas tree lights transformer	£12.98	£2.16
			Total Expenditure		£210.18	£29.16

This left a balance of £20,870.67

Payments due in March:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
12/03/2020	32-1920	Cheque 805	Mick Britton	Refreshments for Highways meeting	£10.60	£0.00
12/03/2020	33-1920	Cheque 806	Denise Crowther	Section 137 Grant	£50.00	£0.00
				Totals	£60.60	£0.00

There is a payment due in early April:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Payment Method</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>
04/04/2020	01-2021	Cheque 807	First Impressions	Hanging Baskets and Planters	£3119.40	£519.90

Cllr Britton proposed payment and the payments were unanimously approved.

The RFO stated that there is a payment due from the Golf Club for the newsletter advertisement. Cllr Stones has discussed this with them and they have shown her “proof” of such a payment being made. After some discussion it is believed the payment has gone to the Village Field Committee. Cllr Stones will pursue the matter.

ACTION VS

Cllr Stainer expects the balance at the end of the financial year to be just under £21,000.

2020-03-06 Planning Matters:

- i) 1 Applewood Gardens, Darrington
Application Approved

- ii) Land at Trinity Farm, Grove Hall Lane
Distribution Warehouse
Application Approved

- iii) Fold House, Estcourt Road, Darrington
Single storey extension and roof alteration to allow room in roof
Application approved

There was some discussion surrounding an application on the “Old Great North Road” believed to be in Wentbridge. The parish council has not been notified of such an application and the clerk will access the planning website and distribute details to councillors. Once again notification of this planning application has not been sent to the council. The regular emails ostensibly providing new planning applications and decisions on applications simply isn’t working!

ACTION IT

2020-03-07 Report of meeting held at Kyte Hotel 27th Feb:

Mr. Martin Barnes, the Commissioning & Delivery Manager of the Planning, Transportation and Highways Service at Wakefield MDC, visited the village on the 27th February. He held a meeting with Cllrs Britton, Jackson, Stones and the clerk.

Cllr Britton drove Mr Barnes around the village pointing out the issues that were of concern to the council. Mr. Barnes will send us his report of the meeting.

The following topics were discussed :-

- i) The “crossing” at the hump in Estcourt Road just west of Estcourt Drive which has tactile paving implying that it is indeed a pedestrian crossing. Mr. Barnes stated that he would look further into putting a formal pedestrian cross in Estcourt Road.

- ii) The 7.5 tonne signs in Valley Road, believed to be inconsistent with those in Estcourt Road. Mr. Barnes agreed they weren't particularly clear but are correct and the amount of work involved in changing the statutory regulations regarding this restriction would be significant, and so cannot justify that time.
- iii) Marlpit Lane narrowing and accidents at the traffic lights. Mr. Barnes stated he has no record of any accidents in Marlpit Lane nor at the traffic lights. The clerk has since Mr Barnes meeting received a response to his "Freedom Of Information" request to West Yorkshire Police which itemises eight accidents at the traffic lights and three since 2017. The clerk circulated this document to councillors and has sent this information to Mr. Barnes.
- iv) Regarding the use of the land to the side of the exit from the north bound A1 being used as an unofficial lay by for lorries parking there. He believes this is not legal but did use the phrase "be careful what you wish for" – implying blocking that area off might well result in the lorries parking further down this road. He will look into it and let us know his conclusion in his report along with the name of the person at Highways England responsible for such matters.
- v) Litter on the slip road, which was cleared the next day. Again, he believes this is a Highways England matter with responsibility lying with the person whose details he will forward.

The chairman reported that he was pleased with the meeting and the interest shown by Wakefield MDC and looks forward to Mr. Barnes report.

2020-03-08 Reports:

School Report

At the previous night's governors meeting the coronavirus situation was discussed and the school will follow any government advice.

Village Field

Currently there are no plans to cancel the "Feast & Fayre" in June.

"In Bloom"

It is believed there has been a "rough sleeper" in Philips Lane with two "dens" having been created. He appears to have gone and the area needs tidying. The councillors will form a team to tidy the area soon.

ACTION MB and other volunteers

Gardening Club

Cllr Tagger reported this month's meeting had a large turnout. The "Open Gardens" event for 2020 will be publicised as an "open garden week" although in practice it will involve consecutive weekends only. On the 14th of June a couple of gardens will be open. The following weekend the other gardens will be open for public visits.

Police Report

Cllr Stones has had no report from the police this month. An attempted burglary of Mr Morrell's trailer from a field had failed as there was evidence of attempts to cut the chain securing the trailer.

Newsletter

Cllr Staines has been asked to include a flier for a shop in Pontefract. The meeting concluded this could be done for a fee of £25. Cllr Stones will insert the fliers between pages within the newsletter.

2020-03-09 Minor Items:

- i) Coronavirus situation – the chairman asked for comments regarding the ongoing situation and how councillors felt about assisting any residents requiring help – such as shopping – at this difficult time. The councillors agreed and asked the clerk to contact AGU UK offering help should they be aware of and having difficulty with supporting our villagers. Cllr Tagger will prepare and install a poster to be put in the usual places offering advice.

ACTION AT/IT

- i) The clerk is continuing with his training and is in a better position to audit what has been the practice of the council as set up by the last “paid” clerk. He reported that things need to change to bring us into line with acceptable practice. From now on he stated that the agenda must be prepared by the clerk and it must contain any items where a vote will be required. The agenda must be publicised and with councillors three clear days before any meeting. As Darrington usually holds meetings on Thursday evenings the latest the clerk can email the agenda is on the prior Sunday and he will ensure copies are posted on notice boards before the Monday. Currently the agenda has been published well in advance but in order to accommodate any late proposals requiring a vote leaving the publication until the Sunday is desirable. The clerk will study agenda from other councils to home in on a suitable format but would ask all councillors to let him have details that need to go on. He stressed that decisions can only be voted on and adopted if they refer to items on the agenda and that acting on items as they crop up in the meeting is illegal. Additionally, he will ensure that any correspondence received is forwarded to all as and when it is received in order that councillors will be informed in advance of these items being discussed at the meeting. These actions must commence immediately and he will be introducing additional changes in the next few months.

Date Of Next Meeting: Thursday 9th of April 2020 at 19:00 hours.

The meeting closed at 20:45