

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 7pm

This meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

PRESENT: Cllr Pat Woodfield (Chairman), Cllr Paul Berrisford, Cllr Margaret Briggs, Cllr John Charles-Jones, Cllr Andrew Gough, Cllr John Newsome, Cllr Richard Pannell, Cllr Daniel Raynor, Cllr Colin Starke, Cllr Charles Wardle.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Helen Greensmith (GBC, part), Cllr Boyd Elliott (NCC, part), Ian Patchett (Via, part), Averil Marczak (Clerk). 5 residents/members of the public observed all or part of the meeting.

4189. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA)

No additional interests were declared.

4190. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January were approved.

4191. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR SOPHIE HOPKIN AND VACANCY

The Chairman reported that Cllr Sophie Hopkin had resigned. The Chairman thanked Sophie for her contribution to WPC. The vacancy had been advertised in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and no requests for an election had been received. WPC could co-opt a new member and it was agreed that the vacancy should be publicised via the Woodborough Web and the Woodborough Village Facebook page, as well as via WPC's notice board and website.

4192. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman thanked Cllr Wardle for his work on the proposed replacement flooring at the Village Hall, and also for helping with urgent cemetery matters. The Chairman thanked the flood wardens for their exertions during recent flooding and flood alerts. The Chairman thanked Cllr Starke for his carefully worded communication asking families using the Governors' Field to respect the Covid-19 rules, or risk losing access. The Chairman reported that she had received 3 emails from a family in connection with the removal of floral tributes from the Cemetery, and she had agreed that a small team should look at possible changes to the Cemetery Regulations, for discussion and agreement at WPC's March meeting.

4193. DISTRICT REPORT

Cllr Greensmith had circulated a report. Cllr Greensmith urged anybody whose property had been affected by flood water to contact GBC, as without this information GBC could not apply for funding to ameliorate the issue.

4194. COUNTY REPORT

Cllr Elliot had circulated a report. Cllr Elliot was working with property owners on Lowdham Lane and Main Street affected by flooding. He reported that there was a programme to check and clean the gullies and drains. He was liaising with a landowner on Shelt Hill to try to ease severe water pooling on the land and on the approach to the mini roundabout on the Epperstone Bypass.

At 7.25pm the Chairman suspended standing orders and invited Ian Patchett from Via to address WPC. Mr Patchett provided an update on various works to resolve flooding issues. Cllrs Briggs and Wardle highlighted several further specific drainage issues, which Mr Patchett agreed to pick up with his team.

The Chairman asked Mr Patchett to provide some detail on how Via managed their programme of repairs to highways and pavements, in light of Woodborough's growing number of problem potholes. He outlined Via's process of routine inspections, which led to reactive, preventative and planned repairs. The Chairman was keen to find out what was in the plan for Woodborough. Several Cllrs asked Mr Patchett to note that their experience of reporting road problems did not match the process that he had described. Many deep and dangerous potholes had been reported, and were yet to be repaired. Some of the repairs that had been carried out were of such poor quality that they would break up after a few days. Some potholes had been overfilled and now presented as bumps in the road. Councillors also challenged the wisdom of trying to maintain roads by applying frequent little patches rather than renewing longer lengths, or at least strips which spanned the full width of the highway. Mr Patchett acknowledged the frustration and dissatisfaction and pledged to revisit the issues which had been raised.

At 8.10pm the Chairman thanked Mr Patchett for attending and reconvened the meeting. The Chairman said that she would write to Mr Patchett and ask for the plan for inspections and repairs in Woodborough.

4195. FLOODING

Following recent flooding, Cllr Briggs had spoken to the Environment Agency and been given a commitment that they would jet the culverts by summer 2021. She reported that flood wardens had been denied permission to reopen roads once flood water had subsided; roads could only reopen once GBC had attended to clean the surface.

Cllr Charles-Jones reported that the ground was still saturated and the village was likely to remain on flood alert until there was a sustained dry period. WPC was aware that many villagers were living in constant fear of flooding. Work continued to develop a long term plan to mitigate flooding and the Environment Agency's report was due at the end of March. He had also spoken to the Lowdham flood group to compare experiences and exchange ideas.

4196. APPROVAL OF GEDLING FORM C TO LEVY PRECEPT OF £74,795

The Chairman signed the form and would pass to two further members for signature.

4197. COVID-19 UPDATE

There was no change to use of the Village Hall or Playing Field. The Head Teacher of Woods School had raised concerns regarding crowding on the Governors' Field after school and Nottinghamshire Police had become involved. Use of the Field after school had been monitored. Cllr Starke reported that he had observed no crowding issues after school, but there had been crowding on sunny weekend days, with the number of parked vehicles suggesting that users were arriving from outside the village. It was agreed that the issue should continue to be monitored.

4198. VILLAGE HALL FLOORING

Cllr Wardle had organised an opportunity for members to view and rank a range of samples in situ at the Village Hall and had circulated the results of his research. The Chairman asked members to vote for either (1) a hard floor or (2) a carpet and all members voted for a hard floor.

The Chairman asked members if they were content to proceed on the basis of the samples they had seen, or if they wished to see further samples. Cllrs Pannell and Charles-Jones said that they would prefer to see additional samples, and potentially examples of installations.

Cllr Wardle proposed that Amtico “Noble Oak” (which had performed well in the research) be fitted and this was agreed by a majority vote (6 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention). It was agreed that the work should be scheduled in school holidays.

It was agreed that Slacks should be awarded the contract, at a price of £4,650 to include removal of asbestos, unless Clarks gave a lower quote in which case the matter would return to the March meeting.

It was further agreed that it would be logical to renew the flooring and sanitary ware in the disabled toilet as a supplementary part of this project, and it was agreed to consider quotes at the March meeting.

4199. PLANNING

Under delegated powers, the Clerk had dealt with application PC1123/GBC2020/1286TCA, for treeworks at 27 Main Street, making no objection.

The following applications were considered:

PC1124/GBC2021/0054 for a single storey extension at Woods Foundation School, Lingwood Lane: no objection.

PC1125/GBC2021/0071 for the demolition of existing caravan storage buildings and erection of 1 no. detached dwelling and detached garage block and associated works at Bank Hill Farm, Bank Hill: no objection.

4200. LIS AGREEMENT

The LIS contract, for a £4,000 grant towards the new permissive footpath on the Sam Middup Field, had been received and reviewed. It was agreed that the Clerk should sign on behalf of the council.

4201. FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020

The financial risk assessment was agreed and the internal audit report reviewed. It was decided not to commission a valuation of the buildings at this stage, on grounds of cost.

4202. INTERNAL AUDIT 2021

It was agreed to ask Andy Hodges to conduct the internal audit for a fee of £200 + VAT.

4203. RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy was revisited and agreed with minor updates.

4204. REQUEST TO USE PLAYING FIELD FOR WEDDING MARQUEE

A request had been received from a village family to erect a marquee on the playing field for a wedding in September 2021. After a lengthy debate it was agreed by a majority vote to give permission, subject to a charge of £250, to include use of the Village Hall. The exact location of the marquee needed to be agreed, taking into consideration how noise might affect the homes that backed onto the field.

4205. FINANCE

The Clerk presented the financial statement for February and 18 payments, totalling £6,058.89 net, were approved for payment. Gross payments over £500: £1992.66 Gedling Borough Council (for the installation of Christmas lights, payment to be sent when the small tree was removed), £695.42 LGPS (staff pensions).

Cllr Charles-Jones reiterated his view that the small tree had cost a disproportionate sum to purchase and decorate, but had added little. He would wish to consider alternative ideas for 2021.

4206. CORRESPONDENCE AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

NALC had briefed member councils that the UK Government was not minded to extend parish councils' ability to hold meetings remotely after May 7th 2021. There was consensus that many members of the council and residents would be unwilling to attend face to face meetings so soon. The Chairman agreed to write to Mark Spencer MP to ask that this be reconsidered. An email had been received regarding the state of repair of the footpath adjoining the new footbridge. The issue was discussed and while members recognised the problems described, it was agreed that there was nothing that WPC could do. A further email had been received regarding the creation of a tarmac walkway on Foxwood Lane and it was agreed to add this to the list of future requests for discussion with Cllr Elliott and Via. Information and a poster regarding the 2021 Census had been received. The Clerk had been in discussion with the Woodborough in Bloom team regarding the allocated budget for this year. The following items were noted: Gedling Police Newsletter; details of DWP Covid Winter grant scheme; RCAN Hall Talk; GBC, various agendas and press releases.

4207. SAM MIDDUP FIELD

Cllr Raynor reported that he had checked the ditch and it was in good order. Parts of the proposed permissive footpath were currently under water due to recent very heavy rain. Cllr Charles-Jones agreed to get quotes for the gates for agreement at the March meeting.

4208. WOODBOROUGH INSTITUTE

Cllr Berrisford reported that the refurbishment works would start on 22nd February. The Institute's chairs and tables were currently stored on the stage at the Village Hall. The Institute had been awarded further grant money by GBC for Covid-19 business disruption.

4209. GOVERNORS' FIELD REPAIRS

GBC had repaired two potholes in the footpath. Cllrs Wardle and Starke had assessed whether it might be worth purchasing material to carry out further repairs inhouse; their conclusion was that it was not feasible, as the material was only available in 10 tonne bags and use of a wacker plate was required. Proludic had reviewed the safe surface around the new springers and reported that no remedial action was due; Cllr Starke would verify their findings by checking the levels once the current snow had cleared. DCM had been contacted regarding a further break in the soft surface under the seesaw.

4210. VILLAGE BENCHES

The Roe Hill bench had been refurbished. It was agreed to review the location for this, and all benches returning to the Governors' Field, later in the spring.

4211. WOODBOROUGH WEB

It was agreed to include: minutes; details of the WPC vacancy; information regarding the Census; information regarding the re-opening of roads following flood closures.

4212. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

It was agreed: Cllrs Starke and Pannell to report on potential actions regarding the Co op site; Cllrs Woodfield, Gough and Pannell to give recommendations regarding changes to the Cemetery Regulations in light of the recent complaint regarding the removal of a floral tribute and personal items.

4213. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next PC meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 9th March.

The meeting finished at 10pm.