

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on February 20th 2018 at 7pm

PRESENT: Cllr M. Bell, Cllr A. Sewell, Cllr. B. Goulton, Cllr Paraskos

IN ATTENDANCE: Melanie Spencer (Clerk and RFO) and 9 parishioners

1 APOLOGIES

No reason for absence were presented on behalf of Cllr Levine

RESOLVED: That this be noted

2 DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 31 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT INTERESTS UNDER THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT There were no interests declared

3 PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2017 as a true and correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday November 22nd 2017 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

4 ONGOING ISSUES

4.1 Transparency fund

The Clerk reported that the grant application has been successful. Monies can only be used to aid transparency.

4.2 The code of conduct was reviewed and councillors agreed to abide by the code.

RESOLVED: That these issues are noted.

5 PLANNING applications

None received

6 PLANNING DECISIONS

1.1 Beech View extension

RESOLVED: To note application was approved

1.2 Clerk explained that the planning application at West View had been received by HBC after the agenda had been circulated on November 15th

The PC meeting took place on 22nd, seven days before HBC acknowledged the application (on November 29th) making it impossible for it to be an item at the November 22nd PC meeting.

The Clerk explained that only Councillors were able to vote on planning applications.

7 ITEMS FOR AGENDA OF NEXT MEETING

None put forward

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8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

8.1 Payments for approval

Clerk reported on payments to be made

8.1.1 Ray subscription £35

8.1.2 Donation to village hall £120. Now the hall is self-funding via popup pub, donation from PC reduced.

8.1.3 Clerk's extra hours setting up Payroll and administering payroll, filing and correspondence with HBC

Clerk invoiced Council for 21 extra hours @ £10.79 per hour

8.1.4 Clerk's expenses for stationary and ink £25

8.1.5 Clerk's working from home allowance for previous years 2015, 2016 and 2017.

3 Years x£216

8.1.6 Contribution to Clerk's broadband costs for 2016 and 2017

24 months x£20 £480

RESOLVED: That the payments be approved and made.

8.2 Payments to be noted

8.2.1 Clerk reported on payments made

8.2.2 HMRC payments for December and January £40

8.2.3 Clerk's salary and extra hours

8.2.4 Parish council guide £98

8.2.5 Clerk's training expenses

RESOLVED: That the payments are approved and noted

8.3 Bank reconciliation

The clerk presented a bank reconciliation and receipts and payments spreadsheet

Spreadsheet made up to February 20th 2018

RESOLVED: The financial statements were approved.

8.4 Internal audits

The internal checks were carried out and no issues of concern had been identified. Due to time constraints it was agreed that the next internal control checks would take place at the next Parish Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That this be noted

Transparency fund grant

Grant has been paid £2255.99

RESOLVED: The grant was noted

8.5 Precept

A precept amount of £4000 was submitted for the year 2018/2019

Resolved: To approve and note the precept amount

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9 CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk asked for bulb allocation decision

Resolved: To approve a request for daffodils

10. Chairman addressed the parishioners with regard to recent planning applications and her role in the process.

11 PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS

Graeme Newton addressed the Chairman and said he was interested in asking questions about the meeting of the PC that took place whilst she was out of the country and Cllr Sewell was chairing the meeting. He asked if he could direct his questions to Cllr. Goulton.

1. Was a Public Meeting held to discuss the proposed planning application at the Paddocks?

Cllr Goulton replied that it was not a public meeting

2. Where did the meeting take place?

Cllr Goulton replied that it was held in her home.

3. Did you see a copy of the detailed plans of the site and proposed structure, as submitted by our Agent to Harrogate Borough Council Planning Department?

Cllr Goulton confirmed plans had been used

4. Did you see this map of the site?

Cllr Sewell confirmed that the plan shown was the one that was discussed

5. The proposed site is on a plot which is not visible to members of the public from any aspect. It is clear that there is a building of considerable proportions to the rear of the site. Are you familiar with the site?

Cllr Sewell confirmed he had not visited the site but was familiar with the site from aerial images

Wendy Marr stated that she had lost her voice so her questions were read out by Graeme Newton

6. Was the Parish Council's decision regarding The Paddocks based purely on its own merit?

Cllr Sewell and Goulton confirmed it was

7. Can you explain why the Parish Council's response to the application for West View was changed from no objections to unanimous objections?

Cllr Goulton stated that she had no objections to either West View or The Paddocks, however at the meeting Cllr Sewell pointed out that they did not fall within the village boundary therefore she changed her vote.

Cllr Sewell replied that he would like to comment but at present was unable to.

8.

Can you comment on the fact that the minutes of the PC meeting suggest that the applications for The Paddocks and West View have not been discussed as a singular unit and not judged on their individual merit, hence one has prejudiced the other,

I quote, "It is noted and agreed that both the above mentioned applications appear to relate to 'significant' developments for the village".

One can argue that increasing the number of homes by approximately 3% is hardly significant?

Cllr Sewell replied that the developments were new builds and therefore different to previous applications.

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9. Why was the Parish Clerk not at the meeting?

Cllr Sewell replied that the clerk was not at the meeting due to having an interest in one of the items on the agenda.

Adrian long

10 Why was a decision of no objections returned to HBC by the Clerk, when clearly there were differing views on the Parish Council?

The Clerk explained that she was an employee of the council, whose role was to return the consensus of opinion from the PC and that HBC request that no comments from individuals are to be forwarded to them. This was standard practice for all applications.

Cllr Goulton explained that there was a limited number of options/observations which the PC could return which didn't allow for individual comments.

Cllr Paraskos commented that only one out of nineteen Parishes that he deals with consults parishioners directly for each planning application.

11 What is the Parish Council's policy on maintaining the rural nature of the village with regard to planning applications?

Cllr Bell responded by saying that in general, everyone would prefer to keep the farms in the village, but the reality is such, that development is inevitable to keep villages alive and therefore each application was considered on an individual basis.

Eric Bell

12.

Stated it that in his opinion it was wrong for Cllr Sewell to hold a private meeting to discuss planning applications particularly when no interests had been declared.

He asked why was the meeting not a public one?

Cllr Sewell replied that there had not been enough time to hold a public meeting, and that he believed the applications were significant and needed to be looked at officially, therefore it was the right thing to do.

The Clerk responded that she had emailed all councillors to advise them that the PC needed to hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss the Paddocks application and that in her opinion there was enough time to arrange and advertise the date for that meeting. There was more than ten days between plans being received and the response date on January 26th2018.

Cllr Goulton stated that she was under the impression that it was an informal meeting.

Why did you email the minutes to Cllr bell whilst she was on holiday?

Cllr Sewell replied that he wanted everybody to be aware of the decisions made.

Janet Colbeck

Expressed concerns that a majority view does not truly represent the views of the Parish Council.

Eric Bell responded that unfortunately that is the nature of a democracy.

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Michael Taylor

Read from a legal document which stated Parish Councils are required to hold a public meeting to discuss planning applications and use local knowledge to inform observations and decisions.

13. How is the Parish Council going to deal with planning applications in the future to

ensure parishioners' are heard and that there is not a repeat of recent issues?

The Clerk responded by saying that the Parish Council would endeavour to hold a public meeting for every planning application, however if the time parameters were too short, the PC would not make any comments about the application.

Michael Taylor complained that if the PC didn't comment the parishioners' views would not be represented, which was unacceptable.

The Clerk pointed out that all members of the Parish are able to respond with their views directly to the planning department via the green notice and the website and that this procedure seems to be working well as the last two applications received a large number of responses direct from parishioners.

14. Cllr Sewell asked why Eric Bell had acted as an agent without receiving financial remuneration. **Eric Bell explained his reasons.**

The meeting became unruly so the Parishioners questions were ended and the parishioners were asked to leave whilst council business which was not in the public interest was discussed.

12 EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

- 12.1 To resolve to exclude members of the public and press under the Public Bodies Act 1960 due to the nature of the following business to be transacted being prejudicial to the public interest. A discussion of Clerk's resignation took place
RESOLVED. To note reasons for Clerk's resignation.

13 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That the AGM incorporating the bi-monthly meeting of the Parish Council yet to be confirmed

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Melanie Spencer

Clerk/RFO

Ribstonparishclerk.com

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February 22nd 2018