

Skipwith Parish Council Meeting Minutes on Monday, 4th March 2024 at 8pm

Present: Councillors Mike Ward (MW) Chairman, Kate Baxter (KB), Jeremy Gerken (JG), Jonathan Radway (JR), Andy Bushell (AB), Ian Hatton (IH), John Purcell (JP)
Isobel Greatrex (IG) Parish Clerk

Item No.	Discussion	Action by	Due Date
074	<p>To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence None required.</p>		
075	<p>To welcome new Parish Councillors MW explained that Parish Councillor, Karen Thompson, had resigned due to work commitments and thanked her for the time she had given during her tenure. He welcomed new Councillors, Ian Hatton and John Purcell to the PC, which meant that the majority of the PC were new members in the last 12 months, who were new to the village and he welcomed the fresh views which they may bring.</p>		
076	<p>Declarations of interest not already declared under the council’s Code of Conduct or members Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests MW confirmed his declaration of interest regarding the allotments and that 2 other Councillors (namely, Ian Hatton and John Purcell) had links to the allotments.</p>		
077	<p>Public Session 7 members of the public were present. Deborah Barton said she was pleased there was to be a consultation and a working party had been set up to further discuss the recreation area and asked if there were any thoughts about creating a recreation committee for fundraising, management and maintenance purposes. As people were asking her if they could use the area, she asked if the PC could communicate it was open to the public. MW replied that the area was still a work in progress project so there was nothing to report, although people can go in. He explained that people are welcome to put themselves forward to be involved but due to lease limitations the PC must remain in control of the land and its uses. JR stated that those people who read the meeting minutes will know the area is open and that there are currently no amenities.</p>		

	<p>Chris Hale expressed his concern regarding a safety issue as he had observed three lads playing football on the recreation area and who had run across the road to the pond as their football had gone over the hedge. He urged caution to the PC as to the land's use.</p> <p>Noel McCool informed the meeting that a previous survey's results had shown that residents, at that time, wanted to put the land to an environmental use rather than a play area. He believed it was important for the PC to look at all the options and to consider what previous residents wanted. He suggested the land could be used for a Community Orchard, which is an initiative the Government supports and for which the PC may be able to obtain a grant. He offered to lead a group to create and maintain such an orchard.</p> <p>MW explained the PC's intention was to be open and put various options to residents.</p> <p>Noel reminded the PC that there was already a designated recreation area (Little Common), authorised by statute, which may be another option to consider.</p> <p>MW expanded on this, explaining that the land historically goes back to the Enclosure Act and some properties in the village have a liability for the land's upkeep, along with it being managed by Escrick Estate and even Riccall. However, this had previously been discussed at a previous PC meeting.</p> <p>Noel McCool said it would bear no cost to residents and it did not need to be specifically located at Little Common, although the area would need to be on common land. He suggested the PC should contact the landowner to see if this area could be restored. He was aware that a previous PC had asked Natural England to become involved.</p> <p>Chris Hale commented that it would be much safer than on the corner of a busy road.</p> <p>JG reminded everyone that the PC had planning permission to situate three benches on the land and the use of the area needs to be resolved one way or another. He continued by informing the public that 40 years ago there had been 60 children in the village and now there was just 20, so the PC needed to ask itself if a play area was worthy of spend.</p> <p>Deborah Barton offered to provide her survey results.</p>		
078	<p>To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th January 2024</p> <p>IG noted that, in her absence at the last meeting, Phil Westoby had not been thanked for removing the old notice board so she wished for the minutes to be amended to recognise this. AB proposed and IH seconded this amendment.</p>		
079	<p>North Yorkshire Councillor Report</p> <p>John Cattanach, County Councillor, had confirmed the new council tax for 2024/25 would be an increase of 4.99%. There was nothing else to report.</p>		

	<p>JR informed the meeting that he had contacted 3 contractors to complete a tree survey on the allotments. However, one was not interested but he had received 2 further quotes, one from Enviroscope and one from ICS Tree Services and had previously circulated them to the PC. He recommended that the PC accept the quote from Enviroscope as its quote of £550 was significantly less i.e. a third of the other contractor's quote. He also suggested that, at the same time, the contractor could survey one of the trees on the recreation area, which may need remedial work. JR proposed and JG seconded.</p> <p>JR continued to inform the Councillors that he had found a source to obtain an IBC container to house water for the allotments and he has found someone who could fill it. He now needed to consult with the allotment holders as to whether they were prepared to pay for it.</p> <p>MW mentioned that he had heard one of the allotment holders was unlikely to retain his allotment but this hadn't yet been confirmed. However, there may be someone else who could be interested in taking over the plot and he was waiting to hear.</p> <p>JR suggested we advertise the allotments in Round Up and Facebook.</p>	JR JR MW	ASAP ASAP ASAP
080.3	<p>Speeding JG provided an update regarding the outcome of the speed rod data which the PC had commissioned. There had been a 10% decrease in speeding since the chicanes had been installed, and the survey concluded that the average speed was 32.8mph, although there were pinch points in rush hour times. Highways are going to paint 30mph on the road and will consult with North Yorkshire Police regarding the installation of vehicle activated signs (VAS). KB and JG had met with the co-ordinator of Bubwith Community Speed Watch. They had been reporting 15 drivers speeding in an hour. An advisory letter from the Chief of Police is sent to the culprits on the first 2 occasions and a visit from the Traffic Police is made on the third occasion. Cheryl Westoby had registered her interest in running a similar scheme with other volunteers from Skipwith. Members were also made aware of other practical measures which have been put in place to reduce speeding in Bubwith. JG confirmed he would follow up the possibility of VAS signs with the police. They cost £2,500 each to install and £250 each per year thereafter. JG also explained that they had enquired about building a T junction, replacing the bend on the road out of Skipwith towards North Duffield. However, it was explained that North Yorkshire Council will not do this as it is based on</p>		

	<p>statistics and as there have been no fatalities NYC would not be able to justify it. In addition, they would not enforce 20mph through the village as there is no school.</p> <p>Phil Ansell asked why there can't be a police presence between 7am – 8am and 6pm – 7pm as last time they came at 1pm, which is clearly a much quieter time.</p> <p>Noel McCool wondered if the Skipwith/North Duffield road could have a chicane. JG replied that NYC thought half a chicane may be useful near The Drovers.</p> <p>JG concluded that he was waiting for the Police to get back to him regarding all the issues.</p> <p>KB asked if JG could find out the results of the speed rods which had been placed near Bridge Farm as it is very dangerous exiting there and it may help reduce speeding throughout the parish not just the village. JG confirmed he would enquire about this too.</p>	JG	To report back by 13 th May
080.4	<p>Village Pond Clearance/Village Green Moles/Scarrow Green</p> <p>IG informed the meeting that she was waiting to obtain a date when York Landscapes would start working on Scarrow Green.</p> <p>KB explained that it was now too late to carry out any work on the village pond as it needs to be between 31st August and 1st March. She proposed that the PC could organise a Spring and Autumn working party every year, on the land and in the water and keep to the set dates every year. Some Councillors were concerned that there would be insufficient volunteers to carry out the work. MW said the PC should keep the suggestion under review.</p> <p>KB agreed to contact Aquatic Maintenance Services to find out if they could provide assistance with the pond.</p> <p>It was agreed that the moles on the village green needed to be stopped. IG was to contact Gary Dickenson to resolve the issue.</p>	KB IG	By 13 th May ASAP
080.5	<p>PC Website</p> <p>AB provided an update as to the research about PC websites which IG and himself had been doing, looking at functionality and accessibility. They had met with a company who specialised in PC websites and they had provided a very comprehensive briefing. The cost would be £500 with a £300 fee per year to maintain the website. AB and IG would now contact another website provider so a comparison could be made. He also explained that changing to a gov.uk website would be considered, in line with Government recommendations.</p> <p>AB proposed that the PC agree in advance to spend less than £1,000 to enable progress to be made, rather than waiting for the next PC meeting. JR seconded the proposal.</p> <p>AB suggested the PC should consider purchasing a laptop for the Parish Clerk's use, at some time in the future.</p>	AB & IG	ASAP

080.6	Round Up Editorial /Facebook It was agreed to publish information about the Recreation Area and the allotment vacancy in Round Up and Facebook. The deadline for Round Up is 5 th April.	KB	Before 5 th April
081	Planning A planning application for the White House, York Road had previously been circulated around the PC. The application was for the demolition of the existing conservatory and utility room and the building of a 2-storey side extension and a new garage and store after the demolition of the existing garage. There were no objections.		
082 082.1 082.2	Matters Requested by Councillors To consider whether the starting time of PC meetings can be brought forward to 7pm (JR) IG had checked with the village hall booker and Thursday and Friday evenings were available. It was agreed that PC meetings would now be held on Thursdays at 7pm as from July. To consider options for curbing the remaining side of the village green (MW) It was agreed that JG should seek advice from Highways as to how to resolve cars driving on to the grass to pass oncoming traffic. In addition, JP informed the PC there was still no road sign for Mulberry Vale. The housing developer had been reluctant to install it whilst there were ongoing boundary issues at North House Farm, which is where the sign would be placed. JP agreed to contact the builder now that there were new owners and the boundary issue appeared to be resolved.	 JG JP	 ASAP ASAP
083 083.1 083.1.1 083.1.2 083.1.3 083.1.4 083.1.5	Financial Matters <u>The following accounts for payment were approved:</u> 083.1.1 John Wright – repair of Christmas tree lights - £117 083.1.2 Reimbursement to MW for HMRC payment - £170 (Tax was £167.40 originally, but £170, included a small amount of interest) 083.1.3 Parish Clerk’s salary 083.1.4 HMRC – employee’s tax - £191.40 083.1.5 Skipwith & North Duffield Over 60’s Club – donation of £50		

<p>083.2</p>	<p>JR asked that, in future, documents regarding the calculation of HMRC tax and employee's salary be readily available in preparation for the meeting.</p> <p><u>Account Maintenance</u> AB agreed to meet with MW to provide a further signatory for both the Virgin account and that of the Skipton Building Society, to ensure there are 3 signatories for both accounts.</p>	<p>AB/MW</p>	<p>Before 13th May</p>
<p>084</p> <p>084.1</p> <p>084.2</p> <p>084.3</p>	<p>Correspondence MW informed the PC that he had received a thank you note from Claire Elwers, thanking the PC for replacing the Christmas tree, which was planted in memory of her daughter.</p> <p>Skipwith and North Duffield Over 60s Club donation request It was agreed to donate £50. MW proposed and KB seconded.</p> <p>Grit Salt Bins A resident had informed the PC that the grit salt bin at the bottom of Main Street, near Westfield, was nearly empty. IG had made an online request to North Yorkshire Council to refill it but had not received a response yet. They are supposed to refill the bins every November. JG suggested the PC bought some grit salt if a response wasn't forthcoming.</p> <p>Garden Waste Licences 2024 NYC had communicated that a licence for the 2024 season will cost £46.50 per garden waste bin for collections between March and early December. The licence can be bought online on the NYC's garden waste page.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.50pm.</p>	<p>IG/JG</p>	<p>ASAP</p>