

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Little Ribston Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday July 18th 2023

PRESENT: Cllr R. Sullivan, Cllr J. Steele, Cllr. J. Dent, Cllr. A. Paraskos

IN ATTENDANCE: Melanie Spencer (Clerk and RFO),

2272 APOLOGIES

Cllr G. Spencer

Resolved: To note and approve apologies

2273 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

Resolved: To note that no interests were declared and no dispensations were requested.

2274 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 4th 2023 as a true and accurate record.

Resolved: To confirm and approve the minutes of the meeting held in April 4th 2023 as a true and accurate record.

2275 Invoices

i) Invoices for approval

Grass cutting - £192

Wildflower report £94.02

Hedge report £109.69

Website maintenance £78.35

Clerk extra hours £54.85

ii) Payments and receipts to June 30th 2023 were checked and noted.

Resolved: To note the invoices received and approve the payment of all outstanding invoices.

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

2276 To conduct internal checks and approve the bank reconciliation

Internal checks were carried out and noted that the payments made in error have been rectified.

Resolved: To note that the receipts and payment were checked, and that the bank reconciliation statement at June 30th 2023 is correct and approved.

2277 Planning Notice

Enforcement notice at The Willows- using Paddock land as a garden

Case officer still hasn't visited the site – awaiting update

New Stone bungalow- Dormer windows approved.

Resolved: To note all planning decisions above

2278 Speeding cars and parking in the village

Speeding cars passing through the village still remains a concern after many years of campaigning by the Parish Council. Previous efforts and how to progress the issue were discussed. Timeline of the campaign below;

2000 – Cllr. M. Bell organised a protest with banners on the street, Cllr. G.Spencer and the Clerk in attendance.

Wetherby news published a newspaper article about the protest.

2010- The Clerk of Little Ribston, North Deighton and Kirk Deighton campaigned for further speed restrictions, reported in the Yorkshire Post.

2013 – Speed survey undertaken – No serious speeding data recorded.

2014- 2017 – Repeated requests for Police Speed guns in the Village.

2017 Volunteer Speed gun initiative organised by the Clerk – abandoned due to lack of support from parishioners.

2019 - 30MPH sign added on the bend at Knaresborough Road.

2021 Parking signs added near Ribston Park. A leaflet asking residents not to park on the pavements was circulated

Speed survey commissioned

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

2022 Grant allocated towards flashing speed sign was passed to the village Hall committee to pay for a defibrillator. Chairman is currently organising a volunteer speed initiative – parishioner support for the initiative is disappointing.

2023 – Speeding cars remains an agenda item on all Parish Council meetings.

Resolved: To note previous attempts to reduce speeding cars in the village and to continue to work with parishioners to fund a vas sign.

2279 – Parishioner's agenda item – Wildflower verge and boundary hedges

The progress of the wildflower verge was discussed after a parishioner's concerns and request for it to be removed and replaced by a grass verge was communicated to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council commissioned a Wildflower report and the following issues raised by a parishioner were discussed;

Request to remove and reseed with grass.

Harrogate Borough Council along with many around the U.K. are encouraging the rewilding of verges, moving away from neatly managed green spaces to increase biodiversity in an attempt to encourage native species of plants and animals declining, due to the dwindling number of natural green spaces in the countryside.

At the time of the survey, there were 9 separate species flowering with a number of insects present collecting nectar and pollen.

Little Ribston Parish Council concludes that the wildflower verge provides a much needed boost to the natural habitat and that a small area of un-manicured verge in a rural village setting is a small price to pay for a thriving bee and butterfly population.

Resolved: To note that the Wildflower verge has positive benefits for the environment so will remain a feature of Little Ribston. To action the Clerk to purchase a sign for the verge which will advise people that it is a wildflower verge.

Parishioners' views were not considered before the verge was created

A public Parish Council meeting took place with wildflower verges on the agenda. We had three letters of support. One parishioner attended, voicing their concerns, one parishioner sent an email with objections. The Parish Council listened to the objections and in response, relocated the verge.

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

The wild flower verge is untidy.

Wildflower verges evolve over a number of years with different species becoming dominant at first. Yellow rattle is one of the first to become dominant but other species will increase over the coming years.

We will endeavour to improve the aesthetics by adding prettier wildflower seeds annually.

Resolved: To action the Clerk to purchase and sow wildflower seeds annually.

The verge is poorly managed

The wildflower verge was watered in the first season but no longer needs the level of maintenance a garden border would need.

The original group of volunteers maintaining the verge stopped doing so after the first season, therefore the Parish Council cut the verge last autumn. Wildflowers should be allowed to seed, cut in September and the arisings removed.

Resolved: To note that Cllr. J. Dent will be cutting back the wildflower verge in September 2023

The wildflowers are seeding, destroying the pavement.

There are weeds growing in the pavements throughout the village, however the Clerk on receipt of the complaint reported to Highways (who are responsible for footpaths) the parishioner's concerns, asking for the pavement to be checked around the wildflower verge, we are waiting a response.

Resolved: To note the Clerk has filed a Highway issue report.

The wildflower verge is collecting rubbish thrown from passing cars.

Two pieces of litter were found and removed during the wildflower survey.

Littering from passing cars is a problem throughout the village which cannot be solved easily by the Parish Council. The wildflower verge is not adding to the littering problem.

Resolved: To action the Clerk to buy safety equipment for litter picking and ask for volunteers to regularly collect litter strewn around the village.

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Concern about the Chairman's review saying; "wildflowers have had positive feedback".

The wildflower verge has had a number of donations of seed from parishioners who are keen to provide natural green spaces to help native species thrive.

Resolved: To action the Clerk to continue to accept donations of seed for the wildflower verge.

Wildflower's causing hay fever

The government's response to this when asked about wildflower's making hay fever symptoms worse is "No, hay fever is mainly caused by grass and tree pollen.

Wildflowers are pollinated by insects so do not release their pollen in the same way as grasses and trees".

Boundary hedges are overgrown

A Boundary hedge survey was commissioned and the following issues discussed;

The guidelines state that hedges should be cut back to the boundary fence or wall. Pedestrian areas should have a minimum headroom of 2.3m. Cars should not obstruct the footpaths.

Hedges are making it difficult for pedestrians to pass without moving to the edge of the footpath, closer to fast moving traffic

24 addresses on Knaresborough/Wetherby road have hedges, trees or vegetation growing over the footpath.

It is an offence under section 1 of the wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built.

The RSPB recommend avoiding hedge cutting during the main breeding season which runs March to August each year. Nesting may occur outside of this period.

Resolved: To remind residents to maintain their hedges and cut back to their boundaries at the appropriate time.

2280 To consider questions from members of the public.

No parishioners in attendance

2281 To consider and note correspondence received and decide action where necessary

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Correspondence regarding the defibrillator

Fiona Friday emailed regarding the grant provided for the purchase of a defibrillator and cabinet. The Clerk could not answer the query due to a lack of public information from the Village Hall Committee.

Cllr. A. Paraskos confirmed that he had provided a grant of £1000 earmarked for a speed sign to the Village Hall Committee which covered the purchase of a defibrillator and cabinet from the Ambulance service. There is some confusion regarding the cost of the defibrillator, cabinet and installation and the amount raised from grants and fundraising events.

Resolved: Cllr. A. Paraskos was actioned to enquire about the progress of a defibrillator to the Chairman of the village hall committee and the Clerk to enquire about the grant from NYCC, amount raised and the cost of the defib, cabinet and installation.

Correspondence regarding weed spraying

A letter informing the PC unauthorised spraying of weeds on the footpaths at the Knaresborough end of the village has been taking place over a number of years by untrained, uncertificated individuals. This is a serious issue as it has implications for wildlife, the environment, pets and unsuspecting pedestrians walking on the footpaths.

The Clerk spoke to the Health and Safety Executive and Cllr. A. Paraskos who forwarded on the matter to NYCC.

Resolved: To warn residents to be aware of this when walking their dogs on the footpaths and to be vigilant for the signs of weed killer poisoning in their pets.

Correspondence regarding children cycling and riding scooters on the pavement.

A letter informing the Council that children are riding cycles and scooters on the footpaths was discussed.

It is against the law to ride bicycles on the pavement.

For children under the age of 10, there is no criminal liability for cycling on the pavement but is antisocial where pavements are narrow or there is a risk of endangerment to other pedestrians.

The organisation Brake recommends that children under 10 should only cycle on safe cycle paths, away from motorised traffic. They also recommend that all children wear cycle helmets to protect their head if they fall off.

Resolved: To monitor the issue and sign post the organisation BRAKE for tips and advice to help residents keep their children safe whilst cycling.

<https://www.brake.org.uk/get-involved/take-action/mybrake/knowledge-centre/advice-for-parents-and-families/cycling-with-children>.

LITTLE RIBSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Vexatious Correspondence

The Council discussed a policy for dealing with vexatious complaints.

The policy was approved (see website for Policy document)

Resolved: The vexatious complaints Policy document was approved and the Clerk actioned to write a letter to a complainant informing them that their correspondence was deemed vexatious.

2282 To note items for the next agenda

Resolved: To note the following agenda items;

Speeding

2283 To approve and note the date for the next meeting.

Resolved: To note and approve October 10th 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall as the date for the next meeting

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Melanie Spencer Ribstonparishclerk@gmail.com 01937 583578 July 25th 2023