

PRESTON UNDER SCAR PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7 p.m. on 19 March 2024 in Preston under Scar Village Hall

Present: Councillors Amsden Fletcher, Higham, Knights and Sayers

Clerk: Linda Stevens

Also present: Unitary Councillor Sedgwick and one resident.

1. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28 November 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 28 November 2023 be confirmed as a true record and signed as such by the Chairman.

2. To declare Councillors' interests in items on the agenda

None

3. Action taken since the Parish Council meeting held on 28 November 2023

Cemetery Extension: the removal of the hedgerow (including trees) had been completed in early December 2023. The grass had been topped and the area of ground where the hedge had been seeded in March 2024. The total cost of the works undertaken was £1474, the majority of which (£1371.96) had been funded by North Yorkshire Council's Locality Grant. The balance of £102.04 would be met from the Cemetery Extension Reserve

The Council's grass cutting contractor had suggested that until the extension was brought into use, the grass should be cut once a month as this would help to improve the grass and the appearance of the area.

The Clerk reminded the Council that it had previously (minute 8(1) of meeting on 6 December 2022) refused an application from a former resident of the village to reserve a plot in the Cemetery but had agreed that the application would be reconsidered once the cemetery extension had been completed and brought into use. Following the removal of the hedge, the applicant had recently asked whether her application could now be reconsidered. The Clerk confirmed that the plot in which the applicant had previously wished to reserve was still available along with other plots.

Councillors had previously discussed the need to create a formal vehicular access into the area of the extension (for ease of access of graved digging equipment) and confirmed that this should extend for the whole length of the cemetery from north to south.

The Clerk referred to the need, now that the extension could be accessed, to produce a map showing the individual burial plots. The meeting was reminded that there had previously been consultation on a proposal by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on proposals to amend the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 in a way which would require a minimum burial plot size of five square metres. The outcome of that consultation was not known, and the Clerk was asked to make enquiries to confirm the current position.

Resolved:

- (1) That until such time as the Cemetery Extension is brought into use, the grass be cut once a month as recommended by the Council's Grass Cutting Contractor.**
- (2) That the request by a former resident of the village to reserve a plot in the Village Cemetery be approved and that the Clerk be authorised to agree with the applicant the plot to be reserved.**
- (3) That the Clerk be requested to ascertain the outcome of the consultation on amendments to the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016, in so far as any impact this had on burial plot sizes in the Cemetery.**

Grass Cutting Prices for 2024: The Clerk advised that grass cutting prices for the coming year would remain the same per cut as in 2023 ie:

- Village £80
- Cemetery £50
- Seats £20
- Cemetery extension £50

Village Play Area: North Yorkshire Council (NYC) had repaired their broken bench in the Play Area, but had notified the Clerk of a hole in one of the pieces of equipment for which the village was responsible. NYC had been advised that the item concerned would be repaired in the Spring 2024. Councillor Higham reported that it was proposed to remove the whole of the seating area concerned.

Resolved:

That the Clerk notify North Yorkshire Council that the defective seating in the Play Area will be removed.

Village Entrance Signs: The old village entrance signs had been auctioned at the Burns Night Supper raising £71.00 which had been donated to the village Hall.

Street Lighting – following representations made by the Parish Council, North Yorkshire Council had agreed to:

- (1) reinstate the 'part night' regime for all street lights in the village
- (2) fit all eight lights with front and rear shields

This work had been carried out in the week commencing 11 March 2024 but problems were persisting with the operation of the part night cells. The Clerk had raised this with North Yorkshire Council and had been advised that it could take a couple of weeks for the cells to settle down.

Resolved:

That Councillor Knights advise the Clerk if the part night cells do not settle down in the next two weeks so that she can advise North Yorkshire Council.

The Chairman left the meeting at this point and Councillors elected Councillor Higham as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Moor Road: following the previous meeting the Clerk had written to the Highways Maintenance Manager, North Yorkshire Council to:

- seek clarification about the significance or otherwise of the flue, and whether it was providing the drainage under the stretch of Moor Road concerned.
- request the Highways Manager to contact the Bolton Estate for any information/records they may have of the flue as soon as possible.

A reminder email had subsequently been sent and a response was still awaited.

Councillors expressed concern that, if left, the flue which ran beneath Moor Road, and consequently the road itself, could collapse.

The Clerk reported that she had received a complaint from a resident about the condition of the road surface through the village since the resurfacing in 2023. The loose stones and gravel were difficult to walk on for both residents and pets and loose stones were being thrown up and damaging vehicles. In addition mud and dog dirt from fouling could not be washed away as the stones were holding it in place.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Clerk write again to the Highways Maintenance Manager about the importance of addressing the condition of the Flue running beneath Moor Road.**
- (2) That, given the condition of the road, the Clerk also request North Yorkshire Council to include the road through the village in the next sweeper run in the area and to advise the Parish Council of the date of that run, well in advance, so that it can help with getting parked cars removed from the road prior to the run.**

Speed Gun: The local PCSO had completed a speed gun course, but was only able to attend approved locations. To become approved, a location needed to be logged on the Police website through this link: [Community Speed Watch | North Yorkshire Police](#) . The location would then be checked and assessed before being added to the list of locations where the speed gun can be used. At present, if a speeder was caught a warning letter was sent. It was hoped that this would develop into tickets/fines in the future.

5. Report of the Clerk on decisions taken since the last meeting

Resolved:

That the following decisions taken by the Clerk under delegated powers between 29 November 2023 and 11 March 2024 be noted:

Subject of decision:

To approve and adopt a proposed Biodiversity Policy Statement on behalf of the Parish Council, to meet the requirements of the Environment Act 2021

Summary of information considered:

Model Biodiversity Policy Statement produced by the Yorkshire Local Councils Association
Outcome of consultation with Parish Councillors

Decision Taken:

On behalf of the Parish Council, to approve and adopt a Biodiversity Policy Statement, based on the model policy statement produced by the Yorkshire Local Councils Association

Date of Decision: 8 January 2024

Subject of decision:

Planning Application ZD24/00009/CLD - Certificate of Lawfulness Proposed for replacement of all existing windows and one door at Sakhir Cottage, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire.

Summary of information considered:

Application documents and accompanying plans
Outcome of consultation with Parish Councillors

Decision Taken: To advise North Yorkshire Council that the Parish Council has no objections to the granting of this certificate.

Date of Decision: 25 January 2024

6. Finance and Banking

The Clerk reported that, taking into account payments since 1 March, she anticipated that the Council's total expenditure in 2023/24 would be £5977 and that the year end balance at Barclays would be £7797.

Resolved:

(1) To note the following opening balances as at 1 March 2024:

Current Account: £8483.47

Savings Account: £2307.35 (including £17.72 interest for 2023)

(2) To note the following payments authorised by the Clerk since the last meeting of the Parish Council on 28 November 2024 under her delegated authority:

Payee	Item	Payment type	Amount
DCN	Hedgerow Removal etc, at the Cemetery	BACS	£1309
DCN	Grass seeding hedgeline And grass cut to new extension	BACS	£165.00
YLCA	Clerk's attendance at Biodiversity Webinar 10.01.2024	BACS	£16.70
Information Commissioner	Annual Data Protection Fee	BACS	£40.00

(3) To approve the Third Quarter Financial Review as submitted to the meeting.

7. Village Maintenance

Councillor Higham reported on the results of her inspections of the Council's various assets as listed in the Parish Council Asset Register.

It was noted that the following Assets required attention:

Bench Seat east end on village green – front two bolts are defective making the bench rock and rendering it unsafe. New bolts required.

Bench Seat at East End of Stanney – arm has broken off

Bench Seat at West End of The Stanney – broken slat - unsafe to use

Bench Seat near play area – unsafe and should be disposed of

Cemetery - fencing at bottom of extension – posts require repair/reconcreting and fence requires rabbit proofing. Also concern about rabbit warrens undermining grave structures

Village Noticeboards – rain damaged. Arrangements were in hand to recover with baize.

Both noticeboards would benefit from repainting/varnishing.

With regard to the old byre currently stored in the barn adjoining Punchbowl House, it was felt that enquiries should be made to establish whether this was an item which Tenants would be able to value, and/or in which Bolton Castle or the museum in Hawes would be interested.

Resolved:

That Councillor Amsden be requested (if he has a means of contact) to contact the family of Tony Metcalfe to advise them of the state of the memorial bench to Tony Metcalfe at the east end of The Stanney and to ask them if they would like the memorial plaque to be returned to them on the bench's disposal, or if they would prefer to install a new memorial bench.

8. Cemetery Extension

Further to Minute 11(28 November 203), Councillors considered the quote received for the provision of a new wooden gate and ancillary work at the bottom of the cemetery extension (ie to replace the existing iron gate), and the provision of rabbit proof fencing in that area.

It was noted that the current gate and fencing had been approved by the former Richmondshire District Council as part of the planning permission granted for the cemetery extension and that any change to the current boundary treatment would require planning permission.

It was also noted that the current gateposts were unstable and needed concreting.

Resolved:

That the current post and rail fencing and gate in the Cemetery extension remain in place but that the contractor be requested to re-concrete in the loose posts, rehang the gate, and rabbit proof the rails and gate as far as this is possible.

9. Biodiversity Policy:

Following adoption of the Council's Biodiversity Policy earlier in the year, Councillors were requested to give initial consideration to how the Council might seek to minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity as a result of its activities and also how it might identify opportunities to increase biodiversity when practicable.

As a first step, Councillors felt that it was important to record and collate data on the current diversity of flora and fauna in its area. It was felt that this was an activity in which a number of residents might be interested in participating. A number of organisations were identified as potential sources of assistance/training in how to undertake recording, including the local Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust, Yoredale Natural History Society and the Yorkshire Naturalists Union, which it was noted would be visiting the Bolton Estate in July and who might be approached about the possibility of representatives from the village joining the event.

It was felt that the forthcoming Village Meeting provided a good opportunity to raise awareness of the suggestion in the village and to see if residents would be interested in

working with Councillors to raise awareness and participate in developing this initiative and helping with the recording.

Resolved:

That Councillor Knights be requested to make initial approaches to the organisations identified during the discussion to find out what assistance they may be able to offer the village and that the matter be included on the agenda for the village meeting.

10. Asset Register Review

Resolved:

That, subject to the outcome of Councillor Higham's inspection of Parish Council Assets (minute 7 above) being reflected in the Register, the Parish Council's Asset Register for 2024 be approved.

11. Risk Register Review

The Clerk reported on options for carrying out a safety inspection of all memorials in the cemetery. The Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) provided a one day practical training course on such inspections at a cost of £195 per attendee for non members. The alternative would be to engage contractors to undertake those inspections at what was likely to be a much higher cost.

The Clerk had also identified a 2 day on line course, provided by the on Cemetery Management and Compliance which she felt it would be helpful for her to attend.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Council's Risk Register, as submitted, be approved.**
- (2) That Councillors Fletcher and Higham be authorised to attend the ICCM's training course on Memorial Management at a cost of £195 each, on dates which are convenient to them.**
- (3) That the Clerk be authorised to attend the ICCM's 2 day on line training course on Cemetery Management at a cost of £195.**

12. Document Retention Policy and Schedule

Resolved:

That the Document Retention Policy and Schedule be adopted as submitted.

13. Portrait of King Charles

The Clerk reported that the Government was offering all Town and Parish Councils a free portrait of King Charles III.

Resolved:

That the Clerk apply on behalf of the Council for a free portrait of King Charles.

14. Parish Council Website and change of domain name/email addresses to gov.uk

Parish Council Website

Councillors were invited to consider whether the Parish Council's website would benefit from a refreshed design and content. The current provider had indicated that they were able to carry out a redesign of the current website for a basic cost of £180. This would provide the following pages: homepage, Councillors details, Minutes, Meetings and agendas, finance, documents, contact page. Additional pages/features could be included at an additional cost.

Councillors were in general agreement that the website needed to be modernised and made more informative and that consideration should be given to making it a village website to which residents could contribute. A separate Biodiversity page could also be included.

Resolved:

- (1) That the modernisation of the current website be approved in principle and that the future content and design be further considered at the next Council Meeting.**
- (2) That in the meantime, the Clerk provide Councillors with links to other websites hosted by the Council's current provider.**

Change of Domain name to gov.uk and provision of gov.uk email addresses

Councillors noted that the Cabinet Office, the National Association of Local Councils and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association were all promoting the use of gov.uk domain names for Parish Councils for security and visibility, including the additional benefit of regular vulnerability checks from the Nation Cyber Agency. Allied to this, the use of gov.uk email addresses was also being promoted. The Parish Council Domains Helper Service were holding virtual introductory sessions to explain the process further.

Resolved:

That the Clerk attend one of the Parish Council Domains Helper Service's introductory sessions and report back to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

15. Report from Councillor Sedgwick

Councillor Sedgwick drew attention to:

- a Transport Survey being conducted by North Yorkshire Council's Cabinet Member for Transport which she hoped as many residents as possible would complete.
- the imminent establishment of the Leyburn and Middleham Local Community Partnership, which was intended to build on existing relationships and partnerships between the public, private and community and voluntary sectors, including the close working arrangements that were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Steering Group for this body would start work shortly and would include David Poole of the Leyburn and District Community Support Organisation, who would act as a link for Town and Parish Councils in the Partnership's area.

Councillor Sedgwick was thanked for her report and attendance.

16. Planning Applications

New Applications:

ZD24/00009/CLD - Certificate of Lawfulness Proposed for replacement of all existing windows and one door at Sakhir Cottage, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire *(the Parish Council had no objections to the granting of this Certificate)*

ZD24/00084/FULL - Full Planning Permission for Single Storey Extension to Existing Dwelling and Detached Garage at Low Scar Barn, Redmire, Leyburn, North Yorkshire

Resolved:

That the Clerk advise the Planning Department that the Parish Council has no objections to planning application ZD24/00084/FULL.

Upcoming Applications: None notified

Update on Previous Applications

23/00129/LBC - Listed Building Consent for Replacement Roof to Existing Modern Lean To Garage at 2 Preston Mill, Wensley Station, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4AG *(the Parish Council had no objections to this proposal - awaiting decision)*

ZD23/00275/FULL & ZD23/00276/LBC – Applications for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for Extension to Existing Garage Including Provision of Rainwater Goods, Alterations to Rainwater Goods of Main House and Installation of Extract Fans/External Vent at Manor House, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire *(the Parish Council had no objections to this proposal -planning permission granted).*

16. Date and agenda items for the next meeting

Resolved:

That the Clerk consult Councillors on the date of the next Parish Council Meeting and the date of the 2024 Annual Village Meeting.

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm

CHAIRMAN