

**Skipwith Parish Council Meeting Minutes on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 8.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors Jonathon Morgan (JM) (Chairman), Mike Ward (MW) Vice-Chairman, Claire Colthirst (CC), Kate Baxter (KB), Trevor Britain (TB)

Parish Clerk: Isobel Greatrex (IG)

**Guest:** District Councillor, Neil Reader (NR)

Item No.	Discussion	Action by	Due Date
029	<b>Fire Safety</b> As it had been some time since the PC had met in the village hall, JM went through some of the fire safety guidelines, including location of fire exits and extinguishers and the assembly point.		
030	<b>To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence</b> Apologies were received from SW and reason for absence was approved.		
031	<b>Declarations of interest not already declared under the council's Code of Conduct or members Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest</b> None.		
032	<b>Public session</b> Eight members of the public were in attendance.  The initial issue raised was about the provision of a play area. They believed that as there are a lot more families in the village due to the new housing developments and nowhere for the children to play, it would be good to see the land leased to the PC developed into an amenity. They would like to see the land fenced, the field mown and some park benches and goalposts installed. One member of the public alleged that the PC were legally obliged to provide a play area and that it was breaching planning policy. They wanted to understand why the community had not been consulted and the reason for the provision of a wildflower meadow rather than a play area. MW stated that a posting on Facebook promoting wrongdoing by the PC without any prior contact with the PC to establish the facts was juvenile. He then proceeded to explain the nature of events in a chronological order. Due to the Park Farm housing development, under S106, Charlie Forbes- Adam (the landowner) had offered to lease a portion of his land for a play area in lieu of any monies. The PC at the time agreed to take him up on his offer and the 99 years lease was signed in 2016. ( <i>Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between local authorities and developers, linked to planning permissions, by obtaining concessions and contributions from the developer</i> ). The donation of the land did not come with any strings attached. A plan for play equipment at a cost of c.£65,000 was proposed to Selby District Council and although the PC had the funds at that time, it would have meant spending 50% of them. Therefore, it was agreed		

	<p>that questionnaires should be distributed to residents to obtain their respective views. There have always been children living in the village but the result of this questionnaire was that there was little or no appetite for this project to progress.</p> <p>Since then, a discussion ensued at a number of PC meetings as to what to do with the land and it was agreed to establish a wildflower meadow and to install a couple of benches where people could meet up and children could play. The PC gained agreement from the landowner to change the land's use. Subsequently, an action plan was put in place and a Conservationist Consultant, who advised Escrick Estate, attended one of the PC meetings and informed the PC the land was already a designated wildflower meadow, part of a stewardship scheme and contained historical ridge and furrow that would be spoilt if ploughed.</p> <p>At this point, and as there had been no further interest shown from villagers, the PC decided to suspend the project and revisit it at some point in the future when the new housing developments were built and the demographics of the village were likely to change. Hence, at the previous PC meeting, one of the Councillors had asked to place it as an item on the agenda again. MW concluded that following planning approval the S106 position had been settled by Escrick Estate providing a parcel of land to the village in lieu of cash. This in itself nor the actual planning consent for Park Farm created any enforceable obligation on the PC to provide a play area.</p> <p>There was further discussion with the public attendees about obligations under the lease, potential access to the land including a dropped curb and the potential for holding another survey on villagers' views for use of the land.</p> <p>Members of the public offered to work with the PC going forward in developing the available area.</p> <p>A further member of the public asked for an update regarding the Skipwith/North Duffield junction. JM informed her it was an item on the agenda and it continued to be progressed with Highways. Notice has been published by Area 7, Highways regarding its proposal to extend the 30mph limit towards North Duffield under the Traffic Order Regulations in order for the public to have the opportunity to object.</p> <p>Three out of the eight members of the public then left the meeting at 8.45pm.</p>	
033	<p><b>Minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 meeting</b> were approved by all members of the PC as a true and accurate record. MW proposed and TB seconded.</p>	
034 034.1	<p><b>Information on the following ongoing issues and to decide further action where necessary:</b></p> <p><b>Highway Safety</b></p> <p><u>Skipwith/North Duffield Junction</u></p> <p>In SW's absence, JM provided an update reiterating the information he stated in item 032.</p> <p><u>Chicane Repair</u></p> <p>The bollards on the chicanes have been replaced, along with the reflective tapes to aid visibility, which means that all the works have now been completed.</p> <p>In addition, a tractor had unfortunately poorly navigated the chicanes, possibly caused damage to the 30mph sign and drove over the remains of an old post. Highways have agreed to straighten the sign and remove the remains of the old post.</p>	

	<p><b>Hedge Maintenance opposite Town End Pond</b></p> <p>Firstly, JM thanked Phil Westoby for strimming the long grass on the pavement opposite the pond. Escrick Estate has now cut back the overgrown hedge which was obstructing the pavement. The Estate has asked the PC if its contractor can maintain this hedge in future and for the PC to recharge the cost to Escrick Estate. The PC agreed to contact York Landscapes and TB offered to provide a further contractor's contact details to obtain a second quote. Quotes will be requested to cut the hedge from the grit box to the bus stop and also from the grit box to opposite the pub.</p> <p>A resident had, yet again, raised the dangers of cars parking on the road opposite the pond, especially on the bend. It had been hoped that the problem would disappear as the pandemic restrictions lifted but this hadn't proved to be the case. The PC agreed that Area 7, Highways should be consulted for any suggestions, including the possibility of double yellow lines although there was concern this may simply move the issue further down the road.</p>	IG/TB	Asap
<b>Not an item on agenda</b>	<p>District Councillor Neil Reader reported on three items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A decision has been made about Local Government Reorganisations in York and North Yorkshire. Local councils in North Yorkshire will be reorganised to form one unitary council across the whole of the county. Neil will send the PC a powerpoint summary of the process and timetable. He requested that Isobel email him as he was having trouble with her email address.</li> <li>- Selby District Council is abolishing its Community Engagement Forums (CEFs) therefore any engagement with the CEF needs to be done soon.</li> <li>- Thorganby PC are looking into pond maintenance and may be in touch for a discussion about pond maintenance and contractors being used in Skipwith.</li> </ul> <p>District Councillor, Neil Reader left the meeting at 9pm</p>	IG	Asap
<b>034.2</b>	<b>Water Sewage Pumping Station</b> IG contacted a resident who lives near to the water sewage pumping station who informed her that, whilst Yorkshire Water vans are still seen attending the station, there have not been any major problems for 6 months. Having taken advice from County Councillor, Richard Musgrave, the PC decided that it will not continue to press this matter, unless circumstances significantly change.		
<b>034.3</b>	<p><b>Asset Register</b></p> <p>IG provided a further update regarding obtaining proof of the PC's allotment land ownership. She had visited the Borthwick Institute and had been able to view a number of various historic documents appertaining to the allotment land but none of the documents confirmed land ownership. She had discovered that North Yorkshire County Council Records Office has Skipwith records dating back from 1894 – 1997. There is mention of the PC's Account books, which includes allotment fees received but again no apparent evidence of land ownership documents.</p> <p>One of the members of public, who is a property solicitor, volunteered to help the PC with its quest. IG to contact her to provide details.</p>	IG	Asap

034.4	<p><b>Pond Management</b></p> <p>KB confirmed that she had gained verbal agreement from Hagrapat that two thirds of Town End pond's vegetation would be removed between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September. She would provide Highways with the required 3 working days' notice. Mark Headley had provisionally confirmed he will remove the waste. JM asked KB to ensure the contractor conducted a risk assessment. KB will make final arrangements with Hagrapat and Mark Headley at the beginning of August.</p> <p>CC informed the PC she had a potential contact for the ongoing maintenance of the pond and would provide the details to IG to follow up.</p> <p>JM proposed that the PC should obtain a quote from Lewis Tree Surgery to remove the brambles and surplus wood piles surrounding Scarrow Green. This was agreed.</p>	KB CC/IG IG	Before 6 <sup>th</sup> September Asap Asap
034.5	<p><b>Litter Picking</b></p> <p>CC informed the PC she had contacted the resident about his proposal to organise some litter picking in the village. He had contacted Selby District Council who will provide equipment and he will then organise once plant growth has receded.</p>		
034.6	<p><b>Bench Repair</b></p> <p>The benches in need of maintenance are located as follows: opposite St. Helen's church, Jubilee commemoration in Main Street, Best Kept Village bench on the village green. KB, TB and JM kindly offered to repair one each. CC will help transport the benches to relevant houses. TB also offered to repair the electric cupboard on the village green.</p>	KB/TB/JM/CC	Before Autumn
034.7	<p><b>Wildflower Meadow</b></p> <p>JM acknowledged the public's previous comments and suggested the PC needs to ask everyone in the village their opinions, again. It was agreed that the PC should clarify the details of the lease and its obligations and thereafter consider a number of actions which may need to take place. TB and CC volunteered to put together a working document.</p>	IG/CC/TB	Asap
034.8	<p><b>Accessibility Regulations</b></p> <p>IG informed the PC that she had not received any correspondence regarding lack of access to the PC's website. The PC agreed that as it was partly compliant it did not propose to take any further actions at this time. However, it would keep this under review.</p>	IG	January 2022
034.9	<p><b>No. 18 Evening Bus Service</b></p> <p>The PC agreed to continue subsidising this service at a cost of £175.90 per annum. TB proposed and CC seconded.</p>		
034.10	<p><b>Farming Machinery</b></p>		

	<p>Following comments from residents last harvest, IG informed the PC that upon request to Escrick Estate, it had written to local farmers requesting them to remind their contractors to drive farm machinery slowly and safely at all times through the village and to ensure no damage occurs to roadside verges, wherever possible. The PC wished to express their appreciation to Charlie Forbes-Adam who facilitated this.</p>		
<b>035</b> <b>035.1</b>	<p><b>Planning</b>  <u>Planning application from Broomhill Plantation, Little Skipwith</u>  The application was a request to excavate two wildlife ponds. The PC had no objections.</p>		
<b>035.2</b>	<p><u>Planning Non-Compliance</u>  IG informed the PC that District Councillor, Richard Musgrave, had followed up its request to assist with the slow progress on the non-compliance issues in the village. He responded by saying that "it is a far more complex legal matter than you may think and the test for enforcement work is whether it is expedient in the public interest for the council to pursue it." He has asked the officer dealing with this to provide an update to the PC and concerned residents as soon as she can.  It was agreed that IG should follow up in 3 or 4 months.</p>	IG	November 2021
<b>036</b>	<p><b>New Code of Conduct</b>  IG had circulated the new Code of Conduct prior to the meeting to enable discussion. The PC agreed to adopt the new Code.</p>		
<b>037</b>	<p><b>Matters Requested by Councillors:</b> None</p>		
<b>038</b> <b>038.1</b> <b>038.1.1</b> <b>038.1.2</b> <b>038.1.3</b> <b>038.1.4</b> <b>038.1.5</b> <b>038.1.6</b>	<p><b>Financial Matters</b>  <u>The following accounts for payment were approved:</u>  York Landscapes – grass cutting for May and June - £528.00  L.A.W. Electrical Ltd – disconnection of old streetlight - £84.00  Gift Voucher for internal auditor - £25.00  NYCC – remainder of chicane invoice - £3,488.85  Clerk's expenses – stamps - £7.92  Clerk's expense claim – defibrillator pads - £86.40  MW proposed and TB seconded all of the above payments.</p>		
<b>038.2</b>	<p><u>Community Infrastructure Levy</u>  JM confirmed the PC had received £660.40 from Selby District Council</p>		
<b>038.3</b>	<p><u>Allotment Fees and Tenancy Agreements</u>  IG confirmed the PC had received £280.00 in allotment fees. MW confirmed there was one fee outstanding. He had received the majority of signed tenancy agreements, with two outstanding, which he would follow up.</p>	MW	Asap

	In addition, IG had recently received an email from Richard Musgrave informing the PC that it may wish to consider applying for a grant from his Locality Budget, which supports community projects.		
<b>039</b> <b>039.1</b>	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p><u>Request for a grant for drainage repairs for St Helen's church</u></p> <p>The PC had taken prior advice regarding its obligations to provide grants to churches/churchyards and in so doing decided it was unable to contribute to this request.</p>		
<b>040</b>	<p><b>Matters for Inclusion on the Agenda for the Next Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway Safety</li> <li>• Asset Register</li> <li>• Pond Management</li> <li>• Bench Repairs</li> <li>• Wildflower Meadow</li> <li>• Allotment Fees and Tenancy Agreements</li> </ul>		
	<p>Meeting closed at 10.12pm.</p> <p><b>Next meeting will be held on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> September at 8.00pm.</b></p>		