

Little Smeaton Parish Council

Little Smeaton Parish Council Annual Meeting May 4th 2021

MINUTES

In line with current emergency legislation this Parish Council open meeting was conducted via Zoom due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the need for social distancing.

Present – Cllr G Ivey (Chair), Cllr R Brown (Clerk), Cllr C. Atkinson (Vice Chair), Cllr A. Hancock, Cllr J. Howdle

No members of the public were in attendance

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Clerk opened the meeting by asking for nominations for Chair. Councillor Brown nominated Councillor Ivey. This was seconded by Councillor Hancock. No further nominations being received and Councillor Ivey indicating her acceptance, Councillor Ivey was elected unanimously as Chair of Little Smeaton Parish Council for 2021/2

Councillor Ivey resumed the chairing of the meeting, and asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Councillor Ivey nominated Councillor Atkinson. This was seconded by Councillor Brown. No further nominations being received, and Councillor Atkinson indicating his acceptance, Councillor Atkinson was elected unanimously as Vice Chair of Little Smeaton Parish Council for 2021/2.

2. Apologies

None

3. Declarations of interest.

None

4. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th and 30th March 2021, were signed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Councillor Hancock, seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

5. Financial Matters 2020/21

5.1. Bank reconciliations, as at 31st March 2021, to be signed as true and correct. The two reconciliation reports were presented to the meeting, one that had been reconciled to the Income and Expenditure Report and one to the Bank Statements. The meeting received confirmation from Councillor Hancock that these were true and correct and advised the Chairman to sign.

5.2 Internal Control Audit for 2020/21 Received from Councillor Hancock. Internal controls continue to improve with no concerns in this period other than a change to invoice ref. 74K. £71.94 paid for dog poop bags rather than the budget, spend and pay minuted for only £67.56 on the 10th March 2021. Difference between budget and spend to payment is 6.5%. Reason for difference – economy bags not available on the day.

Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

5.3 Income and expenditure finance sheet as at 31st March 2021 received. Councillor Atkinson requested that the final statement on the report be changed from “total expenditure” to “net expenditure”. This was agreed. With this change acceptance was proposed by Councillor Howdle, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

5.4 VAT spreadsheet as at 31st March 2021 was received. The Clerk will submit a VAT claim of £1453.78 for 2020/21.

5.5 Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21, including the Internal Audit report received. Acceptance proposed by Councillor Atkinson and, seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

5.6 AGAR Accounting Statements reviewed and answers agreed. Resolve to authorise the Chairman and Clerk to approve and sign the Accounting Statements of the AGAR Part 2, proposed by Councillor Hancock and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

5.7 Exemption from External Audit Resolved that, with an income of less than £25,000, Little Smeaton Parish Council is exempt from the need for an external audit. Proposed by Councillor Howdle and seconded by Councillor Hancock. All in favour.

6. Financial Matters 2021/22

6.1 Bank reconciliations, as at 1st May 2021, to be signed as true and correct. The reconciliation report was presented to the meeting, one that had been reconciled to the Income and Expenditure Report and one to the Bank Statements. The meeting received confirmation from Councillor Hancock that these were true and correct and advised the Chairman to sign.

6.2 Internal Control Audit as at 1st May 2021 Received from Councillor Hancock. Internal controls continue to improve with no concerns in this period. An efficient system has now been established by Councillor Hancock and the Clerk. Acceptance proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.3 Income and expenditure finance sheet as at 1st May 2021 received. Acceptance was proposed by Councillor Howdle, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.4 Budget Report as at 1st May 2021 budget report as at 1st May was received.

6.5 VAT spreadsheet as at 1st May 2021 was received.

6.6 Budget, spend and payment approved for:

- Up to £60.00 for plants for the village signs. Budget ref: C
- £450.29 to Zurich Insurance. Budget Ref: J (3 quotes requested, 2 quotes obtained, Zurich at £450.29 and BHIB at £512.23, one supplier, CAS Ltd, stated they were unable to provide competitive quote at this time)
- £64.50 for dog poop bags. Budget Ref: K
- £14.00 to Bryan Crossdale for printing of the Annual report. Budget Ref: T sundries.
- Up to £30.00 for tape for the playground equipment. Budget ref: I

Proposed by Councillor Howdle, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.7 Payment approved for:

- £600 to NYCC for the supply and installation of a VAS signpost. Previously included in Budget for 2020/21 ref: D. Included in carry forward 2021/2 budget. Budget and spend agreed 10th March 2021.
- £583.35 to D. Curnow for Grass Cutting. Budget ref: A. Budget and spend agreed 10th March 2021.
- In addition, a list of contract payments to be made each month approved

Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

6.8 Virement of £600.00 in 2021/2 budget from carryforward to budget ref: D.

Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

7. Policies

7.1 Structured review of policies. Report by the Clerk received. A structured review of all policies will be undertaken in line with the recommendations made.

7.2 Standing Orders. These have been reviewed by Councillor Ivey. A few small changes agreed, including all reference to virtual meetings. Councillor Ivey to update and send to the Clerk. Acceptance proposed by Councillor Atkinson and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour

7.3 Financial Regulations. These have been reviewed by Councillor Hancock. A few small changes agreed, including all reference to decisions by email. Acceptance proposed by Councillor Atkinson and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour

7.4 Generic and the Financial risk assessments. These have been reviewed and updated by the Clerk. Acceptance proposed by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

7.5 Asset register. This has been reviewed by the Clerk. Recommendation to write-off hand mower from the register accepted. Agreed that a valuation of Hillside Cottage needs to be undertaken every two years. Clerk to diary. Clerk to update register and send to Councillor Atkinson for inclusion on the website.

8. Playground

8.1 Guidance on playgrounds and the Coronavirus. This has recently been updated by the Government. The meeting was advised by the Clerk that, in her opinion, the actions already taken are sufficient to meet the new guidance.

8.2 Prioritised improvements to the playground. Report received from Councillor Atkinson, making recommendations for improvements to the playground, including replacing the rope on the single roped Rope Walk, greasing the steel roller drum and rubbing down and treating the timber Rocking Balance Beam. Also recommended is the replacement of some of the playground surface. Concerns were also raised by Councillor Atkinson about the logs at the top of the slope. Councillor Atkinson and the Clerk to meet at the playground to take these issues forward.

9. Ground Maintenance. A prioritised list for Ground Maintenance improvements was received from the Clerk. Agreed to obtain quotes for the removal of the roots on the verge to the right of the playground, and for a grit bin for Mount Pleasant, appropriate (child and animal friendly) weed spray to be purchased for Water Lane for later in the Summer, and Councillor Ivey will remove the saplings from Hodge Lane near the parking area.

10. Deregulation on Quarry Lane. The deregulation needs to go to NYCC legal department and is subject then to consultation. It is unlikely that anything will happen for six months. Clerk to agenda for September meeting.

11. AJ1 Project. The completion of the road safety project funded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office was confirmed. Item closed.

12. Highway Drainage on New Road and Main Street. The completion of the NYCC highways project to improve drainage on New Road and Main Street was confirmed. Item closed

13. To receive any planning applications, and note any comments sent.

None received

14. Correspondence Received

- Correspondence received from resident requesting permission to plant trees in memory of his mother. The Chairman, Clerk and Councillor Howdle met with the resident on Cross Hills. It was agreed that the resident will fund the purchase of a memorial bench, an apple tree, a crab apple tree and a cherry blossom tree. The Clerk to liaise with the resident to facilitate this happening. It was also agreed that, if other residents wished to place memorial benches on Cross Hills, this could be facilitated.
- Correspondence received from resident suggesting a joint public meeting with Kirk Smeaton Parish Council to promote sustainable heating. This idea is supported by Councillors, with the possibility of widening the agenda to include other “green” initiatives. Clerk to discuss with Kirk Smeaton Clerk with the possibility of conducting a survey of local residents to gauge interest. Clerk to enquire whether SDC or NYCC has an expert who would be prepared to talk to us. Councillor Atkinson to feedback to resident.
- Correspondence received from a resident suggesting the compilation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. Councillor Atkinson has looked into what is involved with compiling a Neighbourhood Plan and Councillor Ivey has attended a training event. Both made aware of the complexity of such a plan and the significant resources required to complete, both in terms of time and money, with a minimum spend required of £10,000. The meeting felt that, as the need was small, the resources required significant, and as no land in Little Smeaton has been earmarked for development on the Selby District Council plan, this was not something to pursue at this time. Clerk to share this decision with Kirk Smeaton Clerk. Councillor Ivey to feedback to resident.
- Letter from Matthew Brown Rural Housing Enabler SDC. Clerk to respond to Mr Brown, not supporting the request for a survey of housing need in the area.

15. Matters for inclusion on the next agenda

- Playground improvements
- Ground maintenance plans
- Hillside Cottage improvements
- Promoting a “green” agenda
- Review of grass cutting contract and promoting wild flowers

16. Date of next meetings:

21st July 2021, 15th September 2021, 17th November 2021, 19th January 2022,
16th March 2022

Matters to be dealt with in private

17. Hillside Cottage. A prioritised list for improvements to Hillside Cottage was received from the Clerk. Clerk to discuss recommendations with the Agents.

18. Review of Clerk’s role. Discussed at the meeting and agreed to continue with Councillor Brown acting as the Clerk on a voluntary basis for the time being.

19. Meeting closed at 8.45pm