

**Little Smeaton Parish Council Meeting 24th July 2024  
Community Room, Kirk Smeaton**

**MINUTES**

Present: Cllr G Ivey (Chair), Cllr C Atkinson (Vice Chair), Cllr A Hancock, Cllr J Howdle, Cllr I Carpenter.

**1. Apologies**

None received. All Councillors present

**2. Declarations of interest**

2.1 No declarations of interest were received under the Council's code of conduct or members' Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

2.2 No applications for dispensation were received.

**3. Parish Clerk vacancy**

3.1 Councillors noted, with thanks for all her hard work, the resignation of Barbara Smith, Clerk due to ill health. A letter of thanks to be written.

3.2 Councillors considered the one application received for the above vacancy following the appointment process and confirmed Roz Brown in post.

Proposed: Councillor Atkinson, Seconded: Councillor Hancock. All in favour

**4. Minutes from previous meeting**

4.1 The minutes of the open meeting held on 15th May 2024 were agreed as a true and correct record. Proposed Councillor Carpenter, Seconded Councillor Howdle. All in favour. The minutes of the full Council meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May were agreed as a true and correct record. Proposed Councillor Howdle, Seconded Councillor Carpenter. All in favour.

4.2 Any, actions, approved at the previous meetings held on 15th May 2024, not on the substantive agenda were reviewed, and agreed completed, except for 17.1. This to be reviewed at a later date.

**5. Public Forum**

5.1 No members of the public were present.

## 6. Financial Matters

6.1 Councillor Hancock confirmed that the bank reconciliations as at 30th June 2024, have been checked and signed as true and correct.

6.2 Councillor Hancock reported that the current internal control audit as at the 30th June 2024 was correct

6.3 The current finance sheet as at 30th June 2024 was signed by Cllr Ivey as a true and correct record. Proposed: Councillor Carpenter, Seconded Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.4 The budget report, as at 30th June 2024, was received.

6.5. The VAT spreadsheet as at 30th June 2024 was received.

6.6 The contractual payments list was signed by Councillor Ivey and Councillor Atkinson as a record of regular payments made to date.

6.7 Councillor Hancock presented the revised NALC model financial regulations 2024, to the meeting for approval. However Councillor Atkinson questioned items 5.2 and 9.1. Councillor Hancock agreed to look at these again and to represent the financial regulations for approval at the September meeting. Councillors also noted that, following the resignation of the Clerk, the LSPC Financial Regulations had been reviewed, as required, by Councillor Hancock.

6.8 Councillors noted the requirement to immediately update name and contact details for all bank accounts following the appointment of Roz Brown. Proposed Councillor Ivey Seconded Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.9 Councillors resolved to approve budget, spend and pay for up to £30 for Community Room Hire for the meeting on the 24th July 2024. Proposed Councillor Ivey, Seconded Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

6.10 Councillors resolved to approve budget, spend and pay for up to £30 for ink and paper for the Parish printer. Proposed Councillor Howdle, Seconded Councillor Atkinson.

6.11 Having considered three quotes, Councillors resolved to approve the emergency purchase of a laptop (£549.00) and software (£45.16) following approval at the Parish Council meeting on the 15th May 2024 of budget spend and pay of up to £750 on a new laptop and software. Proposed Councillor Carpenter, Seconded Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

6.12 Councillors approved the expenses claim from Councillor Hancock following purchase of the software, mouse and equipment as outlined in agenda item 6.11 . Proposed Councillor Ivey, Seconded Councillor Howdle. All in favour.

6.13 Councillors approved the transfer of £594.16 from Lloyds variable capital account to Lloyds current account to facilitate the purchase of the laptop, software, and other essential equipment. Proposed Councillor Ivey, Seconded Councillor Atkinson. All in favour.

## 7. Events Team

7.1 Councillors considered the report from the representatives of the Events Team, including Councillor Hancock who reported on the Duck Race and Picnic on June 29th 2024 which

raised approximately £700 after expenses. Councillor Hancock also gave an update on plans for the village fete on August 31st 2024 which will host a dog show and stalls, which are free for residents. However Councillor Hancock reported that more volunteers are needed on the day and Councillor Howdle volunteered. In 2025 (date not known) the Events team intend to host another Picnic in the Park, including “Welly Wangling” and a duck race.

7.2 Councillors considered the need to cut the playing field grass in time for relevant events, and noted, with thanks, an offer from a local resident to cut and bail the grass provided it is at least one foot high. Clerk to ensure that the grass is left to grow prior to the dates once known and to give the local resident at least one weeks’ notice

## **8. Safe Route to School**

8.1 Councillors considered next steps with regards to the suggested safe route to school, and agreed to raise it with Highways at the meeting due to take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> July. It was also agreed that Councillor Ivey and the Clerk would write to North Yorkshire Council to formally raise the issue.

## **9. Social Values Activities Funding - National Highways**

9.1 Councillors noted, with thanks, the progress made on the Social Values Activities project, in particular the paved area underneath the beacon.

9.2 Councillors noted, however, that no progress has been made towards the erection of a boundary fence on Cross Hills. Councillor Atkinson to email National Highways to ask about this.

9.3 Councillors also noted with regret, the latest update from Councillor Ivey that the work on the bridge on the A1 will not be completed, as hoped, in August. No date for completion is available at this time.

## **10. Well**

10.1 Councillors discussed the merits of, and agreed to, establish investment in the well concrete surface to allow the installation of a Christmas tree, following damage caused by high winds last year. Councillor Carpenter has asked for two quotes to replace the stones and insert a concrete plinth into which the tree could be slotted. He has also asked for two separate quotes for the repointing of the wall surrounding the well. Councillor Hancock asked if consideration could be given to erected a mock well in the area, and Councillor Atkinson asked about the possibility of installing an electric supply. Both ideas were accepted for further investigation but it was agreed that the priority at this time was the safe erection of a Christmas tree. Councillor Carpenter will seek a third quote and bring these to the Parish Council meeting in September. Councillor Atkinson will enquire with Kirk Smeaton Parish Council and Norther Powergrid about the possibility of an electricity supply.

## **11. Hodge Bridge**

11.1 Councillors considered possible methods to repair the river bank at Hodge Bridge, which has been damaged by dogs swimming in the river. Councillors were reminded by Councillor Ivey that Little Smeaton Parish Council had agreed to maintain the repair done a few years ago by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. Following discussion it was agreed that providing a ramp for

dogs was not practical, and that Councillor Ivey would ask advice from the Drainage Board. To agenda for the September meeting.

11.2 Councillors noted that the recent damage to the rails leading to the bridge has been reported to Highways with a request that this be included in the site visit referred to in agenda item 13.

**12. Grass triangle - replacement of Christmas tree planted for the late Queen's platinum jubilee**

12.1 Councillors noted, with thanks, the generous offer by an anonymous donor of tree(s) to plant to replace the one destroyed.

12.2 Councillors agreed to accept the offer of a Christmas tree in order to still provide a decorated tree as requested by residents on Mount Pleasant. If possible a taller tree than previously would be ideal. Councillor Ivey to contact the anonymous donor.

**13. Extension to 30 mph speed limit on Willowbridge Road, erection of stop sign, repainting of white lines and dropped kerbs.**

13.1 Councillors noted that, following a serious accident on the 22nd of June 2024 and subsequent request to Highways for an extension of the 30 mile speed limit, erection of a stop sign, and the repainting of the white lines, that a site visit was arranged for the 15<sup>th</sup> July. However this did not take place and a further visit has now been arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

13.2. Councillors Ivey, Atkinson and Hancock to meet with Highways officials and report back on the outcome.

13.3 Councillors noted that Highways have been sent the Chairman's report re dropped kerbs and have responded that the Area Maintenance Manager has filed the report and will submit for funding in the financial year 2024/5.

**14. Street Lighting Maintenance.**

14.1 Councillors considered the implications of having NYC inspect and maintain the parish council owned street light and the financial costs of going ahead with this, and decided to proceed. Under these arrangements the three village owned lights will be inspected every 6 years with a chargeable electric test and if a fault is found this will be fixed within 7 days at a cost of £48.00 plus VAT or £360.00 if more work is required. A full replacement of the light would cost £1200. At least one of the lights currently doesn't work, and will certainly need replacing, whilst the other two are likely to require new lamps, A total cost of £1920.00 is, therefore likely, but this will be a capital rather than a revenue expense. Councillor Atkinson to send the details to the Clerk so this can be taken forward.

**15. Trees Inspection**

15.1 Councillors noted that the tree inspection took place on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July and the report received on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Quotes will be required for the work to be undertaken, but first Councillor Ivey will prioritise the necessary work. If possible quotes to be brought to the September meeting.

## 16. Domain Name, Website, Web Hosting

16.1 Item deferred from meeting on the 15th May 2024.

16.2 Councillors heard an update on the options and costs of migrating to a Government domain, in line with the current Government recommendation. Whilst migrating is not, at this time, a legal requirement, it seems likely that this will change in light of central governments drive to see all official business conducted through [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domains and email addresses. In view of this, Councillors felt it was important to migrate now and, hopefully, take advantage of the Cabinet Office grant of £100 + VAT which is the cost of registering a [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domain for the first two years.

Councillor Atkinson presented the meeting with possible options.

Staying with Wix is possible but complicated and less than ideal as they are unable to register or host [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domains. Parish Online could provide a new website and domain name, including a Gov.uk email. This would cost £1944.00 over 4 years. Free Thought could provide Gov.uk email, with limited storage, and a domain name but don't offer a web site service. This would cost £1,000 for 4 years. For the website they work with Suffolk Cloud who would set up a website for a fee of £200.00 and would copy across all the information from the current Parish Council site. Suffolk Cloud also offers a management service for the web site. This would cost £1220 over 4 years. After discussion the Councillors agreed to proceed with Free Thought and Suffolk Cloud, including the website management proposal. Councillor Atkinson to find out how much extra storage would cost and firm up the proposal for the September council meeting. Proposed: Councillor Carpenter, seconded Councillor Howdle, all in favour.

## 17. Hanging Baskets

17.1 Councillors noted with regret the lack of hanging baskets in the village this year. The Clerk to seek to obtain quotes for next summer, from First Impressions, a local resident who has offered to help and a firm in York. Councillor Atkinson to send the details of the local resident to the Clerk.

## 18. Policy and Procedures Reviews

18.1 Councillors agreed to adopt the revised Policies and Procedures for Data Retention and Data Protection. Proposed Councillor Atkinson, Seconded Councillor Hancock. The Data Audit policy and procedure requires some more work and will be brought to the September meeting, by Councillor Atkinson.

Councillors also agreed to adopt the revised Gifts and Hospitality policy. Proposed by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Councillor Carpenter. The Code of Conduct requires further work and will be brought to the September meeting by Councillor Ivey.

18.2 Councillors noted policies to be reviewed for the September 2024 meeting:

General Privacy Notice (CA)

Councillors and Employees Privacy Notice (CA)

**19. To receive any planning applications and note any comments sent.**

- 19.1 No new planning applications received.
- 19.2 Following comments sent by LSPC, notification received that the application at The Willows, Stan Valley has been granted.

**20. Parish Council Land adjacent to Hillside Cottage**

- 20.1 Councillors noted the request received from the owners of Hillside Cottage to purchase a small additional portion of adjacent land. Following a discussion the Councillors agreed that there is currently no business case for the Parish Council to want to sell any of the remaining land and no justification for doing so, particularly following the guarantee the Council gave to local residents at the time of the sale of the cottage not to sell of any other "green areas". Councillor Carpenter agreed to inform the owners.

**21. Finance Group**

- 21.1 Bought forward from the January Parish Council meeting on what projects capital can be spent. This matter has been completed. No further action is required.
- 21.2 Councillors noted the recommendation from the Finance Group with regards to the Lloyds fixed rate account that will mature on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024, and agreed to roll over the £65,000 for another six months. Proposed by Councillor Ivey, seconded by Councillor Howdle. All in favour. Councillor Hancock to take this forward.
- 21.3 Councillors noted the recommendation from the Finance Group, that, following the Clerk vacancy, LSPC had only one card for the Lloyds current account. This caused difficulty when the card holder was away, and the purchase of essential equipment was then made using a personal bank card, and that a third card should be considered. Following discussion it was agreed that the Vice Chair would hold a third card to be used only in exceptional circumstances. Councillor Hancock will arrange this once the current changes have been actioned by Lloyds bank.

**22. Correspondence Received**

- 22.1 Letter received from Lloyds bank informing the Parish Council's account wouldn't be covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Councillor Hancock reported to the meeting the response to her questioning of this, and the acknowledgment by Lloyds that it was a mistake. The Parish Council is covered.
- 22.2 Councillors considered the verbal request made to the Chairman by a resident on Chapel Lane, to cut back overgrown shrubbery opposite the 'lay-by' and agreed to take this forward. Councillors Atkinson and Hancock to cut back the shrubbery.
- 22.3 Councillors considered the request from the researcher for Lord (Don) Foster, who has been campaigning on the issue of the safety of lithium batteries, in the House of Lords, to support his campaign to improve the safety of these batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal, but decided not to support this at this time

**23. Matters for inclusion on the next agenda:**

- Well
- Hodge Bridge
- Tree Inspection
- Hanging Baskets
- Policies and Procedures, including the financial regulations, the data audit policy and the code of conduct.

**24. Date of next meeting:**

**24.1** Councillors to note that in accordance with the agreed schedule, the next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council would be held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024

There being no other business, the Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.00 pm.

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Cllr/Clerk</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
	<b>24<sup>th</sup> July 2024</b>		
6.7	Items 5.2 and 9.1 of the Financial Regulations to be reviewed and updated policy to be presented at the September meeting	AH	Completed
6.13	Transfer £594.16 from Lloyds variable capital account to Lloyds Current Account	AH	Completed
7.2	Ensure grass on Cross Hills cut for events	RB	Ongoing as required
8.1	To write to NYC to formally raise safe route to school	GI/RB	
9.2	Email National Highways re boundary fence on Cross Hills	CA	Completed
10.1	Third quote required for plinth at well	IC	
10.1	Enquiries about an electric supply at well	CA	
12.2	To accept offer of tree for grass triangle	GI	Completed
11.1	To ask Drainage Board for advice about repairs to the bank of the river by Hodge Bridge	GI	
13.2	To meet Highways re Willowbridge Road etc on 25/7/24	GI, CA, AH	Completed
14	To send street light maintenance email to Clerk, and take forward	CA, RB	Completed



15	To prioritise tree maintenance work, and obtain quotes	GI/RB	
16.2	To proceed with Free Thought and Suffolk Cloud. To enquire about extra storage space	CA	
17.1	To obtain quotes for hanging baskets next year	RB/CA	
18.1	Data Audit policy and Code of Conduct to September meeting	CA/GI	
18.2	General Privacy Notice to be reviewed	CA	
18.2	Councillors and Employees Privacy Notice to be reviewed	CA	
20.1	Hillside Cottage to be informed of PC decision	IC	Completed
21.2	Capital in Lloyds fixed rate account to be rolled over for another six months	AH	Completed
21.3	A third bank card to be obtained	AH	Completed
22.2	To cut back shrubbery on Chapel Lane	CA/AH	