

WESTOW PARISH COUNCIL

Westow Parish Council Meeting – 16th July 2020 – Zoom Meeting

A Zoom Meeting of the AGM was held on the 16th July 2020. Members of the public could attend the Zoom meeting if they so wished and a note to this effect had been put on the Village Noticeboard and on the Website

Attendees:

Helen Crews (HC) Chair, Angela Fothergill (AF) Clerk; Pennie Hamer (PH) Richard Bannister (RB); Geraldine Burton (GB); Margaret Thompson (MT); John Smith (JS) Christine Smith (CS), Jaynie Pateraki (JP)

Apologies:

Neil Johnson (NJ)

Annual General Meeting

Adoption of 2019 Minutes

The minutes of the AGM held on 16th May 2019 were proposed by PH and seconded by CS as a correct record.

Election of Officers

The Councillors nominated HC to remain as Chair. JS agreed to remain as Treasurer and AF agreed to continue as Clerk.

Treasurer's Report

JS had distributed the Treasurers Report

£6054.46 was brought forward from financial year 2018-2019 consisting of £5061 from the Parish Council account (including £1868.60 remaining in the Transparency fund) and just over £835 from the Village Hall account. Note that Transitional Relief and Small Business Relief negated the Non-Domestic Rates for 2019-2020.

Income of £3774 was received consisting of £2300 in the form of Precept, £300 Locality Budget grant, a donation of £500 towards a defibrillator and £674 from village hall hiring.

Expenditure amounted to £4445.76. Investment in a defibrillator has been partly paid for from parish funds and a generous donation from a local fundraiser. Financing the work of the Parish Council, including Clerk's salary and continuing membership of YCLA and CPRE accounted for about £800. Servicing the Village Hall (insurance, energy, water) accounted for just over £1500 towards which £674 was recovered through hiring charges. Note that £1000 of the balance being carried forward to 2020-2021 is being held in reserve to support the running costs (largely the annual insurance) of the village hall. A contingency fund of £1500 has been set aside to cover the cost of renewing the floor in the village hall. The £300 Locality Budget grant is allocated towards a replacement entrance door.

Compliance with the Transparency Code accounted for £239 of spending to maintain the Parish Council website. The balance of the initial funding received in 2017 being carried forward into 2019-2020 is £1629.80.

The Financial Summary shows just over £5300 being carried forward into 2020-2021. Accounting for dedicated funding and contingency reserves about £1200 is available assets.

As we were unable to hold a formal AGM of Westow Parish Council, authorities, including Parish Councils, had been allowed greater flexibility this year to meet remotely to agree the accounts. The accounts for 2019/20 were internally audited by Robin Graham. The accounts were then emailed to the Councillors and were approved as a correct record and were signed off by HC and JS. The accounts were posted on the website at the beginning of June along with the Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2019/2020 Part 2 for Smaller Authorities.

AF minuted the signing off of the accounts as an Extra Ordinary meeting at the end of May 2020.

It was mentioned that it may make the accounts clearer if the Village Hall account and Parish Council account were consolidated in to one account in the future. This proposal will be considered formally at our next meeting.

Chair's Report

HC distributed her Report:

Westow Parish Council – Chair's Annual Report April 2019 - March 2020

Well, it has been quite a busy year and the Parish Council (PC) has worked well together. We were pleased to welcome Councillor Susan Graham to our January 2020 meeting. Susan knows the parish well of course and is a valuable link to Ryedale. Several planning applications have been seen and none were controversial. Following concerns raised by residents, in summer 2019 we agreed that more posts should be installed around the

Village Green to protect it from damage by parked vehicles. The PC is grateful to Neil Johnson for organising the work.

The PC had also agreed in 2018-19 that the Village Hall needs some maintenance work both externally and internally. During a visit from Councillor Caroline Goodricke who joined our PC meeting in November 2018, it was suggested we should apply for a small grant (£300) specifically for improvement work. Angela Fothergill chased this and we received the money in February this year. This, combined with an agreed budget for works enabled planning to go ahead.

In September 2019 members of the PC and some villagers got together to clear the outside of the Village Hall, removing ivy and generally tidying the surrounding area. The following month, led by John Smith, the internal walls and ceiling beams of the main hall were repainted. The kitchen, toilet and lobby area will be done later. Christine Smith sourced a contractor, Danny Bulmer, who would be able to repair and replace the floor in April 2020. The work would include woodworm treatment for the whole floor. In addition, a new door has been sourced.

We are grateful to Julie Price who at a PC meeting in summer 2019 asked if the PC had considered having a Defibrillator installed in Westow. The PC fully endorsed this idea. Julie held an Art Show in Westow Cricket Club and the proceeds were put towards the cost of a Defibrillator with the PC supplying the balancing funds. The Defibrillator was installed on the side of the Village Hall in December and we thank Geraldine and Peter Burton for seeing this through to completion.

The perennial problem of signage relating to the weight limit on Kirkham Bridge continues and Angela has persevered in chasing Ryedale and Highways England to try and get it sorted. We have had more luck with Dog Bins! Three more will be sited around Westow and Firby as the number of walkers with dogs has increased.

The PC's last face to face meeting before lockdown was 11 March 2020. The PC took an early decision to leaflet Westow, Firby and the surrounding area about Coronavirus and to provide contact telephone numbers and web site information should people need help. Many thanks to Richard Bannister, Angela Fothergill and Jaynie Pateraki for volunteering to be contacted. Jaynie was co-opted on to the PC in January. Thanks too must go to Pennie Hamer who keeps our website up to date and to Margaret Thompson whose extensive knowledge of the parish keeps us on the right path. Finally, my thanks to everyone for their continued support.

Regular Meeting

Agreement of Minutes. The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising from Action Log

Maintenance of the Village Hall – Some discussion took place re the Village Hall. The new door has arrived and Danny Bulmer will be fitting it next week – the £300 Grant money from NYCC will be put towards this.

The Village Hall was looking rather unkempt at the moment with weeds etc., RB agreed to go and do some strimming. JS mentioned that some of the guttering was broken and it was agreed that Paddy Hill would see to this. JS said he would cut the hedges at the back of the Hall. **AF to apply for a licence to empty the brown bin. GB offered to put the bin out every 2 weeks.**

Dog bins –**AF to contact Bridget Skaife from RDC to order the 3 dog bins.** The PC agreed that the bins should be placed at the following sites:

1. One at the end of Firby Track (the Westow end) opposite the farmyard turning into Manor Farm
2. One near the notice board in the middle of the Village (near The Hollies)
3. One down Church Lane opposite the first entrance to the Playing Field.

Clerk's Update.

AF mentioned various pot holes near Badger Bank and towards the Stone Trough. **AF to log on the Parish Portal and request repairs.**

Budget and Finance

The current account stood at £3082.94. £1819.34 had been paid to Danny Bulmer for the new floor in the Village Hall; JS would recover the VAT on this payment. Also £790.61 had been paid for the insurance.

The Village Hall account stood at £644.47.

It was agreed to continue with the YLCA Membership. **AF to send a payment of £131 to YLCA**

The Clerk's job description and salary had been reviewed by HC and JS. The salary would be increased in line with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) pay scales for 2019-20 and would be backdated to April 2019. The salary would be reviewed on an annual basis.

Planning Applications

No Planning Applications since last meeting.

AF had received an email from RDC regarding a Certificate of Lawfulness relating to an existing use of the original property of Mrs Sims Badger Bank Road Westow. They had not complied with original planning permission for a new dwelling which had been completed but as a condition of the planning the old building should have been demolished within one month of them residing in the new property this has not happened.

HC had replied to RDC saying the PC has made the following comments:

1)we have no objection to the shed remaining

2)Our understanding is that the planning consent included reference to the original house being unstable and consent to build a new house was contingent on the old unsafe building being demolished.

3)Unless there are exceptional circumstances such as the old building being used by environmentally sensitive wildlife (eg bats) then we feel the original unsafe building, which is now very dilapidated and possibly more dangerous, should be demolished.

AOB

Kirkham Abbey - At the end of May, as the Coronavirus lockdown eased a little, it coincided with good weather but unfortunately we had problems with an excess of visitors at Kirkham. Not only were the numbers large but also the rubbish and general disregard for the area was disappointing. Local residents complained and Councillor Susan Graham alerted the PC. Many thanks to her and to Christine Smith for her work liaising with Olivia Steel at Ryedale District Council (RDC). Olivia was very helpful and promptly contacted the North Yorkshire County Council about the high volume of cars at the weekend and asked if temporary restrictions could be put into place. She also alerted North Yorkshire Police to the social distancing concerns, car obstruction and verbal abuse towards residents. Both the police and the RDC Community Team patrolled or visited the area. Olivia also spoke with Street Scene who confirmed that rubbish would be tidied and collected by RDC from Kirkham. Finally Olivia said that English Heritage would be made aware of the issues and also the land owner as it is their responsibility to clear any excess rubbish. Although Kirkham has been busy, we have not had a recurrence of these issues.

Playing Fields – There had also been some damage down at the Playing Fields. Steve Tetlow from the Playing Fields Association was aware of this and it has been repaired. Councillors to keep an eye out for anything that needs report to Steve Tetlow regarding the Playing Fields.

An email had been received with various questions to be put to the Parish Council.

- Village Hall- matters regarding Village Hall will be discussed at September meeting. **AF to put on September Agenda**
- Installing more dog bins – **AF has been in touch with Bridget Skaife from RDC and ordered 3 more dog bins.**

- Signs for defibrillator – **GB to purchase a larger sign to go on the Village Hall and also one to go in Firby village.**
- Salt Bins – it was felt that additional salt bins were needed in the Village. **AF to contact NYCC in this regard.**
- Electronic Speed signs in the village – it was felt that an electronic sign with 30 speed limit would not work as 30 mph is not slow enough to go through the village it should be much slower. It was thought that 30 was the lowest limit you could have on an electronic speed sign.
- Benches in the Village – Consideration of best use of the space in front of the Village Hall would be part of the discussion of Village Hall matters in September. – **AF to put on Action Log.**

Roger Dunning – AF had received an email from Colin Payne on behalf of the Table Tennis Team asking if the PC would be happy to have a tree planted in Roger's memory. After discussion it was agreed that the PC would be happy to have a native tree planted, possibly down at the Play Park or Cricket Club. **AF to email back to Colin Payne asking if he had any suggestions of where the tree could be planted**

The meeting ended at 9 p.m.

Next meeting Wednesday 9th September 2020 – socially distanced in the Village Hall

Finance Decisions (for audit purposes)	
Decision	Amount (£)
YLCA	£131