

RAVENSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 7th DECEMBER 2020

Present

Cllr A Ayres (Chairman)
Cllr B Hird
Cllr G Kilvington
Cllr C Robinson

J MacNamara (Clerk)
11 Members of the Public

Cllr Ayres welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. To receive and note apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. To receive 'Declarations of Interest' in items on the agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the:

The Minutes of the Meeting on 29th January 2020 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairman reported on some matters arising. While the pandemic had prevented any plans for a Village in Bloom entry, Ravensworth Nurseries nevertheless generously provided bulbs and summer florae which volunteers planted and the community enjoyed.

Junction improvements had been completed on the A66 but it was noted that any further work was unlikely. The plan to move a litter bin from The Green to the New Lane lay-by was under review.

5. 2021/22 Budget & Precept Setting

The Chairman outlined that the Parish Council precept had been set at £5,200 since 2015/16. It was explained that due to local government reorganisation and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the District Council were seeking to minimise any overall increase in Council Tax and fees and charges.

The Chairman proposed that there should be a small increase in the precept of £200 to £5,400 representing a 3.8% increase for the financial year 2021/22. It was outlined that the additional sum was needed to cover the annual additional costs of maintaining the defibrillator as the original funds had now been exhausted.

A discussion took place with regards to the proposed local government reorganisation. The Clerk explained that the District Council would not exist as we know it in its current form and that submissions had been made to the Minister for Local Government for either a one North Yorkshire Unitary Authority or a two Council solution which would see an amalgamation between Richmondshire, Hambleton, Harrogate and Craven. Either option would still have a North Yorkshire Elected Mayor above that tier of governance.

Going forward it was agreed that the finances of the Council would require greater examination as new developments within the Village came on stream and would lead to a significant increase in the number of residents.

Having proposed the increase of the precept it was seconded and agreed unanimously.

The precept for the financial year 2021/22 will be £5,400.

6. Planning Applications & Updates

The Chairman gave an overview of recent planning applications from across the Village. The Forge Farm development of 5 houses was granted planning in 2016 with minor amendments agreed earlier in 2020. Work had now started, and some residents were experiencing difficulties due to deliveries and parking at the site.

The Mill Farm development proposal had originally been to construct 5 dwellings but when given permission, it was reduced to 3 dwellings after taking into account flooding concerns. The Chairman reported that 2 of the houses to be constructed will make use of existing buildings and that project had also started. The meeting was reminded that as part of the planning permission there were certain conditions attached including the need to ensure that Holme Beck and the mill race are free from obstruction so water can flow freely.

The Chairman informed the meeting that 3 Ravensworth adjacent to Mill Farm was sold with planning permission for a 4 bedroomed house on the site behind the cottage. The Parish Council has been informed that the purchaser is building a house for his family and work on the property has now started.

The meeting was updated on proposed planning permission being sought by Ravensworth Nurseries for a change of use of land to allow the siting of 40 holiday lodges. It was understood that as a result of concerns from North Yorkshire County Council's Highways Department, the application had been delayed. In addition, the Campaign to Protect Rural England have objected to the development. The Chairman explained that in the Parish Council response, it was made clear that a meeting for the whole village was needed to determine its view.

The Chairman reported that planning permission had also been sought to erect 4 new dwellings near Low Barn Tofta Farm. The proposal involves a detached house and a terrace of 3 houses which is situated on the undeveloped side of the road opposite The Granary and The Cottage.

A general discussion took place with regards to planning across the Parish. There was a general concern that there was continued over development within the Village.

Cllr Kilvington was concerned that Ravensworth seemed to be a development hotspot

in comparison to other Parishes. Cllr Hird expressed concerns that infrastructure development was not keeping pace with housing development taking place across the Village.

7. Finance & Payments

The Chairman took the meeting through the current financial position.

The Financial Report was approved and is appended to minutes of the meeting.

8. Reports on Village Green & Hall

Councillor Robinson gave an update on the upgrade to the Village Hall aimed at making it a facility fit for purpose. Cllr Robinson outlined that Covid-19 had been a blessing and a curse with regards to progress of the renovation.

Like other facilities the Hall was closed in March because of the pandemic. In April notification was given that a 100% funding grant from the National Community Lottery Fund had been successful to reconfigure the toilets to allow for disabled access. It was reported that work had been slower than anticipated due to issues within the supply chain. While the work was completed 3 weeks prior to the end of the school summer term, the pre-school chose not to return to the hall and remained at Dalton.

Throughout the pre-school equipment remained stored in the hall at no charge, but further discussions were required with their representatives concerning outstanding utility bills.

Cllr Robinson also reported that the planning department had approved the installation of new double-glazed windows in the toilet block, but the work had been delayed until early in the New Year.

A funding application to Richmondshire Community Investment Fund was approved in June providing a 70% contribution to the costs of installation of a new kitchen. Cllr Robinson informed the meeting that it was hoped to hold a residents Open Day in the New Year to showcase the Hall.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Robinson for all her hard work to upgrade the Village Hall.

Lower track – The Chairman outlined that the upgrade had not been satisfactorily undertaken by RTW and the Council had agreed that further repair would be undertaken before any payment be made. It was anticipated that work would be undertaken in the Spring.

In addition to the condition of the track, Cllr Kilvington considered that efforts needed to be taken to try and combat the speeding of some motor-vehicles on the lower track. As a father of two young children in the village this was a particular concern and one, he was sure, that was shared by the school and its children's parents.

It was also noted that the track continues to be used as a through road by a wide range of vehicles in addition to those of residents and school traffic.

Cllr Kilvington recognized the Primary School as a local asset and considered that any

solutions to the lower track should try to take in all users' requirements. In this light, he hoped that RPC could work collaboratively with all users to find a satisfactory solution.

An e-mail had been received from a school parent regarding problems associated with present arrangement of parking bays track by the village hall. It was agreed that all parking bays should be parallel to the track and vehicles should park in these designated spaces on the track and not on the grass.

A discussion was held about a Village Green parking policy and its enforcement, but the meeting was reminded that any parking policy would require the agreement of residents from across the Village.

There was general concern expressed by Councillors and residents about the speed of traffic through the Village and on the tracks. One resident raised concerns that signage across the Village was not clear and was at different heights. It was agreed that a site visit take place with regards to signage with a view to seeking assistance from Highways in undertaking improvements.

9. Any Other Business

A further discussion took place with regards to the abandoned vehicle in the Village. It was outlined that the District Council were still reluctant to take any action and to move the vehicle depended on the goodwill of the owner.

It was noted that the vehicle continued to cause problems with people being able to turn right. It was agreed that the situation continued to be monitored.

Footpaths – It was discussed about holding an inspection of footpaths across the Village with a view to asking the County Council to undertake work.

Dog Fouling – It was agreed that a reminder be sent via the Flyer reminding people to be more considerate.

Census 2021 – The Chairman noted that the 2021 census would be taking place electronically because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would provisionally take place on Wednesday 10th February 2021.

The Meeting Closed at 20.25pm.

